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OPINION METER

This week's poll:

Did you max out your credit card(s) this past holiday season?

Let your voice be heard! Go to www.saipantribune.com to cast your vote.

INSIDE

Afghan-Bound

The Pentagon is preparing to send at least 3,000 Marines to Afghanistan in April.

NATION...Page 23

Money Choice

Euros? Dollars? Pounds? Gisele Bundchen insists she's perfectly happy with them all.

LIFE & STYLE...Page 34

"Continued reprogramming of funds threatens the Executive Branch's ability to pay its employees and continue operations. CUC must begin cost-cutting measures of its own to continue delivering utility services to the CNMI."

—Gov. Benigno R. Fitial

CUC workers get pay cut

Nonessentials also get work-hours cut

By AGNES E. DONATO
agnes_donato@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

All employees of the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. will face a 10-percent salary cut effective immediately, according to a governor's directive.

On top of the pay cut, nonessential employees will have their work hours reduced by eight hours. Except for critical employees in the collections and payment department and operations department, all CUC employees will adhere

See CUC on Page 4

AIRPORT EXHIBIT JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial and Tasi Tours & Transportation Inc., president Seiji Sato check out the "Nature Photo Exhibit" during its opening inside the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport yesterday morning. *See story on Page 3.*

3 men rob woman inside her apartment

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

A 65-year-old woman was injured when three unidentified men, including one armed with a Taser gun, robbed her inside her house in Fina Sisu Tuesday afternoon.

The victim, a Chinese, suffered minor injuries when she fell trying to chase the suspects.

Department of Public Safety spokesperson Lei Ogumoro said yesterday that police officers were dispatched to YYK Apartment in Fina Sisu Tuesday at 2:32pm after DPS received a report about a robbery.

Ogumoro said preliminary investi-

See 3 MEN on Page 4

Neo Fashion closing this weekend

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Garment manufacturer Neo Fashion Inc. is shutting down its factory in San Antonio this Sunday, but majority of its guest workers want to stay and look for jobs in the CNMI.

Saipan Tribune learned from the Department of Labor yesterday that Neo Fashion's closure effective this weekend will render 88 alien workers and 13 resident workers jobless.

A Labor investigator disclosed that

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'Taga Air shareholders are US citizens' **PAGE 2**

Repairs continue at CUC power plant. **PAGE 9**

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Local

Taga Air shareholders are US citizens—Liu

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSISTANT EDITOR

The shareholders of Taga Air Charter Service Inc. are U.S. citizens and the company's legal counsel is currently in Washington, D.C. working with the Department of Transportation, which had threatened to cancel the company' air taxi certificate.

This was detailed in an e-mail yesterday to the *Saipan Tribune* by Tinian Dynasty Hotel and Casino hotel manager Tom Liu, who also clarified that Taga Air is not owned by TDHC but rather is owned by employees of the hotel who serve as Taga Air's shareholders.

Liu added that Taga Air is still operating as usual in servicing passengers between Saipan and Tinian.

"TDHC's customers use Taga Air's service just as they do use Freedom Air or Tinian Shipping's ferries to travel between Saipan and Tinian."

Email messages sent to Taga Air president Alfred Yue remained unanswered as of press time.

DOT proposed to cancel Taga Air's air taxi certificate if it does not provide proof that the company is owned by a U.S. citizen.

In an order dated Dec. 17, 2007, Assistant Secretary for Aviation and International Affairs Andrew B. Steinberg directed "all interested persons to show cause why it should not issue an order finding that Taga Air Charter Services, Inc., is not a U.S. citizen, as defined in 49 U.S.C. 4-102 (a) (15), and its application for Commuter Air Carrier Authorization under section 41737 of the Statute is denied."

Steinberg also proposed the cancellation of Taga Air's existing air taxi registration pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 40109 (f) and 14 CFR part 298 because of the questionable status of the company's owners.

Taga Air has been given Jan. 22, 2008, to file objections on the order issued by the agency.

Taga Air submitted its proposal to the Commonwealth Ports Authority to provide air transport services between Saipan and Tinian using Piper PA32-300 in May and June 2005.

In Nov. 25, 2005, a Taga Air flight to Saipan took off for nightly charter services between Saipan and Tinian.

Terminated waiter files discrimination lawsuit

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

A waiter has filed a discrimination lawsuit in federal court against his former employer for allegedly terminating him due to bad economy, only to hire other nationalities in his place.

Invictus T. Feliciano sued the Eastern Hope Corp., owner of Keeraku Japanese Restaurant and Rakuen Korean B.B.Q. Restaurant.

Feliciano, through counsel Stephen C. Woodruff, asked the U.S. District Court for the NMI to order Eastern Hope to pay him damages, attorney's fees, and court costs.

Saipan Tribune contacted Keeraku Restaurant yesterday afternoon to get their side, but the manager was not available.

The plaintiff also filed in January 2007 charges of discrimination with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission against Eastern Hope.

Woodruff stated in the complaint filed on Wednesday that Feliciano, a Filipino, was employed as a waiter beginning May 2000 until his contract expired on Feb. 13, 2007. Woodruff said the plaintiff was assigned at the defendant's two restaurants.

"In all respects, Feliciano performed his job in a satisfactory and exemplary manner," the lawyer said.

Despite Feliciano's stellar work performance, on Jan. 13, 2007, the employer informed him that his employment contract was not going to be renewed due to slow business.

"Not long after the plaintiff's discharge, the defendant hired Korean and Chinese waiters and waitresses to work at the Keeraku Japanese Restaurant and Rakuen Korean B.B.Q. Restaurant," he said.

Defendant's ground for termination, Woodruff asserted, "is pretextual because plaintiff was actually discharged because of his national origin."

"Defendant's unlawful and discriminatory practices deprived Feliciano of equal employment opportunities or otherwise adversely affected his status as an employee because of plaintiff's national origin," the lawyer added.

'Fitial made the right decision on rebates'

By AGNES E. DONATO
REPORTER

A Saipan senator came to the defense of the Fitial administration whose use of the recovered cover-over funds had been questioned by some lawmakers.

Sen. Maria T. Pangelinan said that, no matter his real intention, the governor made the right decision in using the funds to pay outstanding tax rebates and refunds.

"It may be that the proper channel for the rebates was formal appropriation by the Legislature. I would hope that the Legislature would have decided to do what the governor did. I think the cover over monies belong to the taxpayers and should be distributed to them," Pangelinan said.

She added that it would be unwise now to divert the tax rebates, as the cash helped boost the local economy.

She said that Fitial's critics should give the governor the benefit of the doubt with regard to his decision on the cover over funds.

"It is possible that the governor bypassed the Legislature to get some good press for his office. It also may be possible that he really believed that the tax rebates needed to go to the taxpayers and was concerned that the funds would be diverted if it was left to the Legislature to decide," Pangelinan said.

House Minority Leader Arnold I. Palacios had questioned the disbursement of the $26.4-million funds from the federal government. Palacios suggested that the funds should have been submitted to the Legislature for appropriation.

The administration recently reached a settlement with the U.S. Department of Treasury on the dispute over federal taxes that the U.S. government failed to transfer—or "cover over"—to the local government.

The settlement resulted in the transfer of $26.4 million to the Commonwealth. The entire amount was used to pay outstanding tax refunds and rebates.

Finance Secretary Eloy S. Inos disclosed that the government owes the taxpayers some $34 million in refunds and rebates. He said the balance will be paid with future tax recoveries.

The local government expects to receive $20 million to $40 million more from federal tax claims.

Nature photos unveiled at Saipan airport

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN
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REPORTER

A total of 14 giant nature photos now grace the walls of the departure area inside the Francisco C. Ada Saipan International Airport.

Hotel Association of NMI chair Lynn Knight said she handpicked the nature photos through the Marianas' Visitors Authority archives before sending them to the Philippines for printing—paid for by Tasi Tours & Transportation Inc.

She explained that Tasi Tours' president Seiji Sato had always wanted to take part in a project that would help enhance the tourism market.

"So I asked him if he would like to sponsor the nature photos and he said yes," she said.

"Interestingly, there was a group of tourists that had just arrived as we were bringing the photos in. Some of the [pictures] were not even hung yet and the tourists were already taking pictures of them," Knight said.

She said she wanted to put up pictures that would depict the islands' natural beauty on what were once bare walls.

MVA board chair Jerry Tan presented a plaque of appreciation to Sato to thank him for his support of the project and for the 30 years of business dedication on Saipan.

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial said he is pleased with the new displays and that he would like to see more improvements at the airport and throughout the islands.

See NATURE on Next Page

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Bill banning firecrackers heads to Fitial

A bill banning firecrackers has passed the Legislature and now awaits the governor's action.

The Senate voted on Monday to approve House Bill 15-205, which ends the sale and random use of fireworks and firecrackers.

The governor is expected to sign the bill into law. He has 40 days to act on the proposed legislation. If no action is taken, the bill will automatically become law.

Under H.B. 15-205, it would be illegal to sell roadside vending of fireworks or firecrackers. The bill would also prohibit the use of fireworks unless supervised by the government or authorized by the Fire Chief.

Violators would face $500 to $1,500 fine, or up to one year in prison.

The proposed penalties are a significant increase from the $25 fine and the 10-day imprisonment provided by existing law.

House Bill 15-205 is a combination of two fireworks control measures that have been sitting in the Lower House for a year now. The original bills were introduced in December 2006 and had been pending in the House Committee on Health, Education, and Welfare.

On Dec. 18, 2007, the committee finally reported out the bill, allowing for a vote by the full House.

"Despite current law, fireworks and firecrackers have become uncontrollable. It has reached a point that [it] is not only a safety concern, but also a nuisance and disturbance to the peace and enjoyment of the general public. [We find] that a broader prohibition on fireworks is necessary in the interest of public health and safety and for the promotion of a strong tourism industry," the committee said. ***(Agnes E. Donato)***

RIBBON CUTTING JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, Tasi Tours & Transportation, Inc. president Seiji Sato, MVA chair Jerry Tan, HANMI chair Lynn Knight, CPA board member Antonio Camacho, MVA board vice chair Marian Aldan-Pierce, Tasi Tours' David Igitol, Pacific Development Inc.'s Yoichi Matsumura and a Tasi Tours official lead the ribbon cutting ceremony for the "Nature Photo Exhibit" inside the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport yesterday morning.

NATURE

From Page 3

"We are making progress but we must keep moving forward to support our vital visitor industry," Fitial said.

Sato said it's not just his duty to help grow the islands but also his passion. From building a new office and transport facility, to sponsoring the nature photos, he said that Tasi Tours is dedicated toward helping grow the islands' tourism industry.

Knight said that the nature photo display is only the second phase of a series of projects that would help develop and improve the islands' international airport. The first project was the children's play area.

PAWS laments continued lack of NMI law protecting animals

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN
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REPORTER

Even before the dog shooting incident that happened in Chalan Lau Lau, the Pet Assistance and Welfare Services has been pushing the Legislature to pass a law that would make it illegal to kill a dog in an inhumane manner.

According to PAWS president Katie Busenkell, "Saipan is the only territory that does not have a law protecting animals from cruel abuse or neglect."

In late 2006, PAWS introduced an anti-cruelty bill to the CNMI House of Representatives for consideration.

According to Busenkell, the bill was modeled after numerous moderate state laws, such as California, Florida, and Ohio.

"To ensure the bill addressed all the necessary points of concern, PAWS solicited the help of animal welfare organizations such as the World Society for the Protection of Animals, a U.N. partner, the United States Humane Society, and the Animal Legal Defense Fund," Busenkell said.

With the help of these organizations, "PAWS succeeded in introducing a bill that was reasonable, fair, and sensitive to our island situation."

Busenkell said the bill was passed by the House, and forwarded to the Senate in January 2007.

"The Senate amended numerous parts of the bill. PAWS accepts some of these amendments because we recognize that the passage of a bill into law requires compromise," said Busenkell.

However, there are various amendments that PAWS finds objectionable if the law is to be truly effective in deterring animal abuse.

Busenkell said that, "if the quality of life for humans and animals alike is to improve in the CNMI, and the CNMI is to become a better place to live and visit, then a reasonable anti-cruelty law must be passed that expects all members of the community to act responsibility."

A neighborhood in Chalan Lau Lau is in an uproar over the shooting of cats and two dogs in their area by a neighbor.

The residents sought help from PAWS and Department of Public Safety commissioner Rebecca Warfield after the neighbor shot dead a bonnie dog along String Beans Avenue Tuesday.

DPS said that Adalberto Camacho has admitted shooting the dog with his .22 Magnum rifle. DPS spokesperson Lei Ogumoro quoted Camacho as saying that he shot the dog because it habitually defecates on his property. Camacho claimed that he had advised the owner about this problem several times already.

Ogumoro said Camacho was not arrested, but his .22 Magnum rifle was confiscated.

"Police determined that there was no clear violation of the law. This case will be forwarded to the Attorney General's Office for further administrative processing," Ogumoro had said.

3 MEN

From Page 1

gation showed that two masked men entered the victim's apartment room through the front door, which was partly open at the time.

One suspect grabbed the victim's purse located near her. The woman, however, held on to her purse, triggering a struggle with the suspect.

The second suspect pointed a Taser gun—a high-voltage stun gun—at the victim's face, prompting her to release her purse.

The two suspects fled on foot with an undisclosed amount of money contained in the purse.

The old woman chased the suspects toward the parking lot, but fell and injured herself.

A third suspect was seen waiting in front of the building with a getaway vehicle, described as a black compact four-door sedan with dark tinted windows.

Two suspects were described as wearing black ski masks, black long-sleeved shirts and black pants. They were described as medium built and between 5'6" to 5'8" in height.

"This case is under investigation," Ogumoro said.

Saipan Tribune learned that many burglary and theft incidents have happened in the Fina Sisu area in the past few weeks. No one has been arrested yet.

Tuesday's incident is the second armed robbery to hit Saipan in four days.

On Saturday, two masked men staged an armed robbery at Ling Lin Store in Chalan Kanoa. One suspect was carrying a machete.

One suspect was described as wearing a grey long sleeved shirt and a black mask. The second was wearing a shirt. Both were described as slim and between 5'5" to 5'7" tall.

On Dec. 15, 2007, three men, including one armed with a Taser gun, robbed Kang-Da Mart in As Lito. The getaway vehicle was driven by a third suspect.

On Dec. 14, 2007, two men robbed two tourists at Suicide Cliff in Marpi. One robber was armed with a Taser gun.

NEO

From Page 1

26 alien workers have already left for China, but the remaining 62 are opting to stay and find new employers.

Labor Administrative Hearing Officer Jerry Cody on Wednesday had granted 82 Neo Fashion workers, mostly Chinese, 30 days from Jan. 14, 2008, to submit an application for transfer to new employers. Cody said these workers may transfer to non-garment jobs if qualified.

A Labor investigator, however, told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday that 26 of the 82 have decided to go back to their home country.

Cody said if any of these employees requests repatriation or if repatriation is ordered, Neo Fashion shall be notified and must provide a repatriation ticket within 15 days. The employee, he said, must depart the CNMI within 15 days after the ticket is delivered to Labor.

The hearing officer revoked the work/entry permits for the factory's all alien workers effective Jan. 13, 2008.

Cody directed the guest workers who are allowed to seek new employers to register with Labor's Division of Employment Services and Training on or before Jan. 17, 2008.

In the latter part of November 2007, Neo Fashion notified Labor about its intention to close operations by Jan. 13, 2008.

Neo Fashion, through its general manager Hee Chan Lee, informed Labor it is an unfortunate decision for the management to close the factory.

"Due to adverse economic conditions brought by the application of the federal minimum wage act in the CNMI, and the trade competition in China and other Asian neighboring countries, the increased costs of conducting business in the CNMI, and the lack of orders overseas prompted us to cease the garment operation," Lee said.

With Neo Fashion's closure, there are now 13 garment factories that remain open. Seven of these have already announced their planned closure by this year.

On Jan. 16 and 28, 2008, Sam Kwang Saipan Corp. and Poong In Saipan Inc. will close respectively. L&S Apparel Inc. ceased operations on Dec. 31, 2007, but many of its alien workers also decided to stay and look for other jobs.

Many garment factories closed down on Saipan since January 2005, when the World Trade Organization lifted trade quotas.

The liberalization of trade rules has allowed Third World countries—with lower wages—to export their garments to the U.S. As a result, many garment factories in the CNMI shut down operations.

CUC

From Page 1

to a 72-hour biweekly schedule. CUC will close all affected departments on non-payday Fridays.

The directive by Gov. Benigno R. Fitial came on the heels of his extension of the state of emergency at the utility agency.

Fitial noted that since the initial declaration last month, he has reprogrammed $5 million in local funds to CUC to pay for fuel delivery from Mobil.

"Continued reprogramming of funds threatens the Executive Branch's ability to pay its employees and continue operations. CUC must begin cost-cutting measures of its own to continue delivering utility services to the people of the CNMI," he said.

On Dec. 5, 2007, Fitial declared a state of emergency for CUC due to its lack of funds to pay for power generation fuel. That declaration was extended for 30 days beginning Jan. 4, 2008.

The state of emergency declaration allows the governor to assume full control of CUC and suspend all regulatory statute provisions and regulations applicable to CUC, including procurement regulations. The governor will also have the power to reprogram all available funds to address CUC's problems.

In addition to the local funds, the administration has reprogrammed $6.5 million in capital improvement funds for emergency power plant renovation.

Despite these emergency measures, however, critical CUC issues remain that require the involvement of the central government, Fitial told the Legislature in a report issued earlier this week.

He noted that CUC remains in a negative cash flow situation. Fuel price hikes and legislative attempts to cut CUC's revenue generating ability do not help, he added.

The governor reiterated the previous administration's concern about the issue of fuel storage capacity and ownership.

New Chamber prexy vows to cultivate relationship with govt

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSISTANT EDITOR

Arenovski

Newly installed Saipan Chamber of Commerce president James T. Arenovski promised to continue to reach out to the government to improve public-private sector cooperation, especially in issues regarding the economy.

"Our Government Relations, Economic Development committees, and the board will improve our relationship with the Legislature, administration, and Cabinet members by making sure that we have open and direct communications so members can have more information on legislation and more news about the different departments' rules and enforcement efforts," Arenovski said during last Saturday's Chamber installation dinner at Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan's Hibiscus Hall.

Arenovski, who is president of Delta Management Corp., said he would support closer ties with government, but cautioned that the Chamber at times might take a dissenting stand on government policies.

"Although it would be nice if we could agree on all issues, whether we agree on topics and issues that relate to business in the NMI is less important than ensuring that the Chambers' collective voice is heard… there is a saying…'It isn't personal it's just business' we all need to be reminded of that at times when discussing issues," he said.

Arenovski added that the Chamber plans to cultivate its relationship with the government by initiating breakfast meetings and other similar forums so issues can be discussed and opposing opinions can be heard.

"The results of a lunch meeting with the governor and the Chamber this past year proves that this type of one-on-one communication really works. Our work at the Chamber is not to tell the political leaders what to do, but to work with them for a better CNMI. This is done by meeting regularly and by making the effort to know our leaders better so we can understand them and their intentions better and they can do the same with the Chamber."

"We want each legislator and Cabinet member to know that the Chamber is here to assist in forming legislation on business-related issues. We are offering our expertise as needed in the formulation and drafting of business related bills, not just to review them after they are complete. Having input from the chamber on business-related legislation is better for the CNMI as a whole," he continued.

Arenovski said the Chamber will also put a significant effort into improving communications with various groups and associations on the island.

"We will be more inclusive and seek insight and opportunities from beyond our membership. With the assistance of our very effective and successful membership committee chair and director Steve Jang and the board, we will bring more Chinese, Korean, Japanese, and Filipino business leaders into the Chamber," he said.

Moreover, Arenovski said the Chamber will continue to develop stronger alliances with other business association such as HANMI, SHRM and SEDC.

The Chamber's embrace of other groups does not end there.

"We also need to open discussions with other groups such as Tao Tao Tano and the United Filipino Organization as well other civic, ethnic, and cultural groups. We are stronger by hearing each other out directly rather than speculating and guessing their intentions and motives from a distance. Granted, some of these groups have not been associated with the Chamber in the past, but we owe it to our organization to listen at the very least," Arenovski said.

In response, Gov. Benigno R. Fitial's press secretary Charles Reyes said he welcomes the Chamber's effort to develop closer ties with the government and congratulates its new set of officers.

"The governor has enjoyed a good working relationship with the CNMI's business community, including HANMI, SEDC, and the Chamber, and we expect this to continue in 2008 and throughout the governor's term in office. The governor welcomes the Chamber's overture and congratulates its new president, Mr. Arenovski."

"In the past, the Governor has repeatedly said that government could not operate without the private sector," added Reyes.

Aside from Arenovski, other Chamber officers installed Saturday were Harry Blalock, vice president; Kathryn Barry, secretary; Michael S. Johnson, treasurer; and directors Doug A. Brennan, Steve K. Jang, Alex A. Sablan, David M. Sablan Sr., and John J. Santos.

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Rookie lawmakers undergo seminar

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Incoming freshman lawmakers attended a seminar about laws and the legal system sponsored by the Commonwealth Judiciary and the Northern Marianas Judiciary Historical Society yesterday.

Seven newly elected representatives participated in the Law and the Freshman Legislator program held at Guma' Hustisia in Susupe.

The participants were Reps.-elect Joseph N. Camacho, Raymond D. Palacios, Ralph DLG. Torres, Edward T. Salas, Christina Sablan, Rosemond Santos, and Joseph C. Reyes.

Chief Justice Miguel S. Demapan made the introduction about the 3rd biennial Law and the Freshman Legislator program.

Associate Justice Alexandro C. Castro examined the role of the Covenant and the interaction between Commonwealth and federal constitutions.

Associate Justice John A. Manglona conducted a video presentation as to the inner workings of the appellate court and its decision-making process.

Manglona also briefly discussed the role of courts in the development and interpretation of common law in the Anglo-American legal system.

During a break, the incoming lawmakers toured the courthouse to meet with the staff.

Associate Judge Ramona V. Manglona tackled how the courts determine legislative intent and discussed the constitutional limits of statutes and certain issues often encountered in drafting legislation.

Commonwealth Law Revision Commission director Naomi Lujan-Gonzales explained the legal resources available at the Commission.

The program ended with a luncheon and roundtable discussion with the newly elected lawmakers and the judges and justices.

In an interview, Rep.-elect Sablan said the seminar was very informative and helpful to the incoming legislators.

"They're covering all the different responsibilities of the court and the relationship between the judiciary and the other branch of the government and of course particularly between the judiciary and the legislature. I think it is an excellent seminar for incoming legislators," Sablan said.

Rep.-elect Camacho said she really enjoyed the seminar.

"It is a good refresher course for myself and perhaps the other members. [There is] indication from them that they are also enjoying getting a view of the judiciary side," Camacho said.

Associate Justice Manglona said they first ran the program in 2004, then the previous participants recommended that the judiciary should continue it.

Manglona said the purpose is to just familiarize the new legislators with the workings of the judiciary and also the laws.

He said the new lawmakers are also introduced to the legal resources that are available in the judiciary, especially in the Commonwealth Law Revision Commission.

"They're able to see the work product of both the judiciary and the legislature through the legal resources and books here (Law Revision). So we want to introduce them to all these legal resources and make life as a legislator easier for them in the next years," Manglona said.

The program, Demapan said, is tailored from a similar program conducted by the Washington State Supreme Court and the State of Hawaii.

The associate justice said the program originated from a recommendation of a Washington State Supreme Court chief justice.

"We took a look at their program and we found it can be relevant here," Manglona said.

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'Zoning law will help property values rise'

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSISTANT EDITOR

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ
Zoning Administrator Steve Tilley talks to developers and business owners during the Saipan Zoning Law educational workshop at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe Tuesday morning. The law will be effective on Feb. 1, 2008.

Zoning Administrator Steve Tilley said the Saipan Zoning Law of 2007 is a boon to the CNMI economy rather than a bane as it may stimulate the local economy by increasing the value of properties on the island.

"This law will help a lot. It will certainly help the economy through new investment and will give the value of properties a boost. Overall, it's going to help improve the quality of life here on Saipan—it's going to make the place a lot safer for traffic and pedestrians… we can start to see a dramatic improvement on Saipan in the next five to 10 years," he said after Tuesday's zoning training held at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe.

The training lasted the entire day and was divided into three sessions—a detailed presentation for developers, engineers, architects, businesses, and government agencies in from 8:30am to 11:30pm, a presentation for adult businesses from 1:30pm to 2:45pm, a presentation on signs: repair of old signs and construction of new ones from 3pm to 4:45pm, and an overview of the new zoning law for the general public from 6:30pm to 8:30pm.

Tilley said businesses that currently do not conform with the new law need to be certified by the Zoning Board that they existed in their location on Feb. 1, 2008. The certification will protect them from penalties under the new law.

"It goes on effect on Feb. 1, so all developments have to get Zoning approval after Feb. 1. All developments must get permits after that date and, again this is for new development. Most of the existing development can stay where they are but there are limits on how much remodeling, renovation, and expansion they can do," he said.

He said a major effect of the new zoning law would be on new development. Tilley said it will be a gradual process but five years from now, people on Saipan will see a very different island than what they see now.

"What we want to do is to register the noncompliant so that we can say 'yes you are officially there' because in two years, if we look at them and say 'wait a minute you weren't there before Feb. 1, you just put your sign [or constructed your extension] last week.' We're going to say 'you're nonconforming, you're illegal. If you're illegal, we're going to have you take it out, but if you're nonconforming, you've a right to continue," continued Tilley.

The Commonwealth Zoning Board has worked on the zoning act for many months. Last week, the Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation passed the bill, which became Saipan Local Law 15-29.

Under the zoning act, there are 13 zoning districts: Garapan Core, Garapan East, Beach Road, Industrial, Mixed Commercial, Public Resources, Rural, Village Residential, Village Commercial, Tourist Resort, Agricultural, Adult Business Overlay, and Adult Business Park.

Each zone has a different mix of allowed uses and standards for development. The zoning district boundaries are shown on the Official Saipan Zoning Map.

The law and map can be viewed on the Zoning Board's website at www.zoning.gov.mp.

Copies of the law will be available for viewing at the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library and for purchase at the Zoning Office, 2nd Floor, Joeten Building, DanDan.

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Army Reserve official checks troops-to-teachers program

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN
Rianne_pangelinan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A senior Army Reserve official is currently on the island to check on the CNMI's Troops-to-Teachers program.

Army Reserve Regional director of Education of Pacific & Asia Marsha D. Wellein flew in from Hawaii to see how the soldiers are doing under the program.

Close to 40 troopers showed up at the meeting to also learn the education services and benefits provided by the U.S. Army reserve education services office. Wellein shared information on payment fees and tuition assistance.

"The objective," Wellein said, "is to open the doors to opportunity for everyone."

She also visited various school sites to meet with the troops and observe them in their working environment, soliciting input on their experiences in the Troops-to Teachers program.

The Troops-To-Teachers program was established in mid-2006.

Public School System education specialist Geri Lynn Lewis said the program is the first to be created for the returning U.S. soldiers to continue their education and at the same time become educators in the nation.

Willis said she is very proud of the outcome of the program, as it has inspired a federal office as well as Hawaii and Guam.

"They have done a fantastic job. I can see that they're going go a long, long way," she said, adding that her experience so far with the program has been very rewarding. "Something positive for the island," she said.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Marsha D. Wellein, M. ED., Education Services Officer, GS 12 & Army Army Reserve Regional Director of Education Pacific and Asia delivers her presentation at the Marianas High School Thursday afternoon.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

Department of Public Health
Women, Infants and Children Program
Navy Hill Bldg N-25

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

On August 8, 2007 the Department of Public Health officially opened the Women, Infants and Children Program, better known as "WIC."

The WIC Program is 100% federally funded, and provides nutritious foods, nutrition education, and health care referrals for pregnant and new mothers, infants and children below the age of five (5).

The WIC Program's goals are to reduce nutrition related health problems, promote breastfeeding, prevent anemia, and help lower medical costs for low-income families in the CNMI.

WIC foods include iron-fortified infant formula and infant cereal, iron-fortified adult cereal, vitamin C-rich fruit or vegetable juice, eggs, milk, cheese, peanut butter, dried beans/peas, tuna fish and carrots. Special therapeutic infant formulas and medical foods may be provided when prescribed by a physician for a specified medical condition.

The Program would like to thank the community for it's patience during the initial phase of operation, and would like to assure the residents of Rota and Tinian that plans are underway to bring services to these respective islands. More information will be provided when the proposed opening dates are confirmed.

Eligible participants must meet income guidelines, CNMI residency requirements, and be determined to be "nutritionally at risk" by a health professional.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, please call 236-8750/58 or visit the WIC Clinic in the CHC Dialysis Center, north entrance.

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

JANUARY 11, 1999

902 agenda set

The Northern Marianas has accepted the proposal of Washington to hold the 902 consultations next week after almost a year of delay in resuming bilateral talks aimed at resolving differences in the handling of local and immigration laws. Lt. Gov. Jesus R. Sablan, head of the CNMI 902 team, wrote to President Bill Clinton's top aide, Edward B. Cohen, agreeing to suggestions to begin the four-day informal discussions on January 19. Cohen is to arrive on Saipan on January 18.

MVA cautions feds on takeover bid

The Marianas Visitors Authority has cautioned the federal government against pushing for a takeover of labor and immigration laws of the Northern Marianas because it will severely hamper efforts to revive the half-a-billion-dollar tourism industry which has been battered by the Asian financial crisis. Amid continued threats of a federal takeover, the tourism agency will continue its mandated task of promoting the CNMI as an ideal destination in the Pacific. "I will not allow that to bother us but the U.S. government will have to pay for the expected earnings in tourism if they continue to push for the takeover," according to Dave M. Sablan, board chairman.

JANUARY 11, 2000

Deficit down by $10-M in FY 99

Drastic austerity measures by the government, including cut in overtime and professional services, resulted in a $10 million reduction in the worsening budget deficit, according to Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio. In a preliminary financial report submitted to the presiding officers of the Legislature covering Fiscal Year 1999, the governor said cumulative budget deficit declined $70.7 million from the record $80.6 million posted in FY 98. Government finance officials are projecting a further decline in the deficit in Fiscal Year 2000 which they said could be obtained through tighter fiscal discipline and economic revitalization efforts.

Teno asks Clinton to halt federal takeover plan

Disputing allegations of failed labor and immigration reforms in the CNMI, Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio has appealed to President Clinton against pushing federal takeover legislation in the U.S. Congress in a move he said will result to an economic catastrophe on the island. He also refuted claims made by his special representative to the 902 talks, Edward B. Cohen, to justify fresh bid to strip the Commonwealth its powers to control local immigration, minimum wage and custom standards. The governor said contrary to the allegations contained in a report from Mr. Cohen submitted to President Clinton, his administration is committed to taking "all feasible steps" to deal with Washington's concerns on its labor and immigration.

JANUARY 11, 2001

Customs' amnesty program flops

Nobody is apparently paying attention to that little box sitting for almost seven years now at one corner of the Saipan International Airport's arrival area, just before the place where the Customs' clearance section is situated. It may be because nobody is aware that it has been there for several years now or nobody really understands what that "amnesty box" is for. There was never a time—since the amnesty box was placed by the CNMI Division of Customs at the arrival area of the Saipan International Airport about seven years ago—did officers find anything inside the box dropped by arriving passengers, according to Director Joe Mafnas.

Gov't drafting regs on tax incentive law

The Commonwealth Development Authority and the Division of Taxation and Revenue have started crafting the implementing guidelines for a recently enacted law which grants tax incentives to new investments and existing businesses under a qualifying certificate program. CDA Executive Director Marylou S. Ada said they intend to have the implementing rules and regulations for the Public Law 12-32, also known as the Investment Incentive Act, published in the Commonwealth Register by next month. Ada, along with officials from the Division of Taxation and Revenue led by Rufin Inos, met with economic and taxation officials from Guam to see how the neighboring island went about its own qualifying certificate program.

Fitial cagey about 18 pct contribution rate

By AGNES E. DONATO
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REPORTER

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial is not keen on signing a bill setting the government retirement contribution rate at 18 percent.

"We don't think that is feasible. The numbers simply do not add up," said press secretary Charles P. Reyes Jr.

The Fitial administration wants the contribution rate down to 11 percent, from the 36.7 percent recommended by an actuarial study.

Under Senate Bill 15-102, the central government and the Public School System will pay 18 percent of the salaries of personnel. Autonomous agencies such as the CNMI Government Health and Life Insurance Office, Commonwealth Development Authority, Commonwealth Ports Authority, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation, NMI Retirement Fund, Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, Office of the Public Auditor, and the Department of Public Lands will pay 36.7 percent.

The proposed effective date is Oct. 1, 2007.

The bill has passed the Legislature, and it is headed to the governor, who will have 40 days to act on it.

According to Reyes, the Fitial administration plans to work with the 16th Legislature on the rate reduction. The new set of lawmakers will assume office on Monday, Jan. 14, 2008.

"The 18-percent rate proposed by the current Legislature necessitates very drastic cost-cutting measures. That is why there is reluctance on the part of the administration to endorse it. We want a rate we can afford," he said.

He added that the administration could simply ignore the law and choose not to contribute to the NMI Retirement Fund, as its predecessors had done. "But we want to do things lawfully. The way to do that is it make the law conform to the economic reality," Reyes said.

For a Saipan senator, however, the debate should not focus around the percentage, but on the total amount that goes to the Retirement Fund.

Sen. Maria Pangelinan noted that, if the government has 5,000 employees and a payroll of $150 million, and the contribution rate is 11 percent, the government has to pay $16.5 million in retirement contributions.

Meanwhile, if the government has 3,000 employees and a payroll of $90 million, and the contribution rate is 18 percent, contributions will amount to $16.2 million.

"It would seen an inevitable effect that with annual revenues dropping from $200 million-plus to about $160 million, that the number of persons employed has or will drop as well. When these threatened layoffs hit the paper, it's just a political tactic, I think, because the number of employees must go down," Pangelinan said.

Repairs continue at CUC power plant

Mechanics continue repair work on the auxiliary system of a base load generator at Saipan's power plant 1, resulting in possible outages today.

In a notice issued yesterday, the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. advises customers that limited power outages were likely yesterday, "and perhaps continuing through Friday."

"The repairs are progressing. The issue is getting into the specific part of the generator disassembling it and reassembling it that takes time. The men haven't stopped working on it; they remain dedicated to completing the task as soon as possible," explained Pamela Mathis, the spokesperson for the utility.

CUC is calling for increased conservation to limit or even completely avoid outages. As customer demand increases through the use of air conditioners or warmer weather, limited or isolated outages will be necessary to compensate for approximately two megawatts of an energy shortage.

Yesterday's scheduled two-hour rotating outages (had they become necessary) would have affected The Annex; DFS; Bank of Guam: China Town, South Garapan along Beach Road to San Jose, at Mt. Carmel south, parts of Susupe, South Chalan Kanoa, at the San Antonio Mobil gas station to As Gonno and toward Southern High School; portions of Chalan Kanoa to Hopwood Jr. High, Talafofo, As Teo, Papago and Kagman I, II, III.

These outages will not be necessary if there is conservation throughout Saipan. The power plant will only trip off a feeder when or as customer demand becomes too high. *(Saipan Tribune)*

Tudela says women are under-represented

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN
rianne_pangelinan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The head of the Ninth Saipan and Northern Islands Municipal Council says that women are historically under-represented in the Northern Marianas and nationwide when they vie for elective or appointive offices.

"While women dominate much of the administrative positions in both the private and public sectors, they do not even represent half a minority in mid-management positions due to lack of representation, and a far cry from anywhere near top managerial positions in government or in the business community," said council chair Marian C. Tudela.

She said that women are being under-represented in policy formation, "including being discriminated against in employment, as in vying for elective or appointive offices."

The Municipal Council is requesting the endorsement of the Fitial administration to house a Center for Women in Business and Community Leadership.

The center would include empowerment development trainings, business coaching, leadership development, and an open forum that would discuss women issues that result in the "decimation of institutional inhibitions and discrimination and ultimately result in facilitating successful women leaders on Saipan," Tudela said.

She said the council realizes the wealth of talents and vast work experiences that Saipan's retirees could offer, "not just as stopgap measures, but a permanent solution to our perennial workforce requirements in the private sector."

"These under-utilized human resources are capable of being successful local entrepreneurs as they are equally capable and exceedingly qualified to take leadership positions in elective and appointive public offices," Tudela said.

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EDITORIAL

'Pursuit of happiness'

In a treatise on government published in 1690, British philosopher John Locke laid out an argument for property rights that would resonate on the far side of the Atlantic. Although God gave the fruit of the land to all people in common, Locke wrote, individuals have dominion over the property that is their bodies. And by extension, they own what their minds and hands produce and have the liberty to do with it as they please.

The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution later echoed Locke's notion that government has no rights to an individual's property, nor can it dictate what that person does to earn it. As a result, we take for granted the freedom to pursue our fortunes as we see fit. Yet, as Locke noted, one person's pursuit often conflicts with another's, so government intervenes to strike a balance. Today, our free enterprise system is regulated in many ways by the exercise of government power, including taxes, industry subsidies and monetary policy. A defining feature of the next president's economic strategy will be how he or she uses government power to tilt the balance in the economy—not just among interest groups and their pursuit of property, but among generations.

The federal budget

The time has come to stop billing future generations for the services we enjoy today. The burden on younger workers will soon be increasing anyway as baby boomers retire in ever increasing numbers. The Social Security system has been masking the federal deficit by collecting more in taxes than it pays in benefits, but around 2014, those flows will start to reverse. For the first time in its history, it will start paying more to retirees than it collects. And if there is no change in the system, the Social Security reserves will be gone by 2042, forcing dramatic reductions in benefits.

We want candidates to drop the facile pledges of budget discipline and to talk about how they plan to scale the role of government to the size of its wallet. Carrying on about "waste, fraud and abuse" in Washington is akin to complaining about the rust on the car that ran you over. Similarly, lawmakers' earmarks (a.k.a. "pork-barrel spending") may be a favorite target of candidates, but they don't raise the government's expenditures so much as they micromanage them. The real challenge is to confront the steady increase in spending on programs that probably have a good reason for existing. They do something for somebody, somewhere. And once they get started, they're hard to stop. But just as individuals have to set priorities, so does government. A good place to begin would be to create a system to track whether programs are accomplishing what they set out to accomplish, as Republican Rudolph W. Giuliani has proposed.

The value of the dollar

The White House doesn't have much effect on monetary policy, which is in the Federal Reserve's purview. But the president does oversee efforts to maintain the value of the currency, which can be undermined when a slowing economy leads the Fed to adopt policies that are looser than the rest of the world's.

The value of the dollar has fallen to its lowest point in more than two decades, a situation that has some short-term advantages (by making U.S. goods relatively cheap overseas, it promotes exports and improves the balance of trade) but that poses

See PURSUIT on Page 11

WE GRIPE ABOUT THE LONG PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN...
WE MOAN ABOUT NEGATIVE POLITICAL ADS...
WE LAMENT THAT NO ONE CANDIDATE STANDS HEAD AND SHOULDERS ABOVE THE REST...
AND YET...
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KOTERBA

Instincts and morals

BETTER LIVING

By DAVID KHORRAM, M.D.
Special to the Saipan Tribune

David Khorram, MD is a board certified ophthalmologist and director of Marianas Eye Institute. Comments and questions are welcome. Call 235-9090 or email him through www.MarianasEye.com, or leave comments at www.MarianasEye.blogspot.com. *Copyright © 2008 David Khorram*

Last week I introduced you to the work of Shamil Fattakhov, a Russian journalist whom I had the opportunity to hear lecture in Guam a few weeks ago. One of his talks was on "Instincts and Morals." Instinct can be defined as an inborn pattern of activity or tendency to action or a natural or innate impulse, inclination or tendency. Instincts are complex reflexes—generally automatic actions. Mr. Fattakhov asked, "What is the difference between the instincts of a human being, and those of an animal?" After some discussion, the participants agreed that at the level of instinct, there are no differences between an animal and those of a human. We share instincts with animals, or put another way, instincts are the expression of the animal within us. Biologists have identified four basic instincts: the instinct for self-preservation/survival; the instinct for food; the instinct for reproduction; and the instinct for territory. All of these are related to survival, but each is a distinct instinct that animals and humans both possess.

So, what then differentiates humans from animals? As a species, it would have to be the power of intellect. Humans have a higher intelligence that is an overlay onto the instincts. It's a sort of reasoning power, but also an evaluative power. It is this capacity for intellect, which is an expression of consciousness and an expression of the human soul. It engenders decision-making, free-will, and the emergence of values such as "right" and "wrong." Animals, lack this capacity of evaluating "right" and "wrong", "good" and "bad", "vice" and "virtue." And as such in their world, they are none of these. They simply exist and function at the level of instinct.

However, instinct is the avenue through which we humans develop and express morals. Every instinct can be expressed in a way that is either "positive" or "negative", as a "vice" or as a "virtue."

To demonstrate this, we went through an exercise of taking each instinct and coming up with the vices and virtues that could be an expression of each of the four basic instincts. For example, the vices of "self-preservation" on an individual and a social level could include war, anger, lying, murder, exploitation, accumulation of excessive wealth, espionage, negative campaigning, backbiting, etc. While on the other side, virtuous or positive expressions of "self-preservation" could include such things as cooperation, resourcefulness, individual initiative, family, justice, hard work, good governance, and planning.

Vices related to pursuit of food could include overeating, exploitation of the environment, cruelty to animals, the proliferation of cooking shows (that one was my idea), withholding food as a means of coercion, and the like. Virtues could be health and energy, hospitality, means of sharing culture, bonding, pleasure, detachment and self-discipline, and expressions of generosity and charity.

Vices related to the drive for reproduction/sex are such things as promiscuity, prostitution, human trafficking, overpopulation, population manipulation through government policies (think "one child" policy), pornography, lust. Virtues might include love, intimacy, children, pleasure, faithfulness and fidelity.

Vices related to the territorial instinct would include nationalism, racial and ethnic discrimination, trade barriers, and xenophobia. Virtues include sane patriotism, environmentalism, pride in ones culture and homeland, a sense of home and hospitality.

This is just the stuff we came up with—the lists could be endless, depending on how broadly you want to address each subject. Now, the job of the human being—the process of "becoming moral"—is to take each of these instincts which we recognize are natural, and to weed out the vices associated with them, and to nurture the virtues related to them.

As I listened to this, it gave me a new framework under which to consider many of the social issues we face here in the CNMI. It is useful to acknowledge that instincts for self-preservation or for territorialism may drive people to take action. The instincts themselves are neither good nor bad. But the expression of those instincts is where a person, or an entire population can go wrong. The issue of immigration has brought to the forefront issues of self-preservation and territorialism. There's nothing wrong with the instincts. They are part of the human condition. So the question becomes, how can these instincts manifest their positive aspects, and what are the negative expressions of these instincts that each individual must strive to subjugate?

EDITORIAL POLICY The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, CIC Centre, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

The peso, the dollar, and everything

By ED STEPHENS
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Ed's column runs every Friday. Visit Ed at SaipanBlog.com.

"Last year I could remit 25,000 pesos a month to my family," a Filipino worker just told me, "but now I can only remit 20,000."

Sound familiar? If so, then you know that this guy didn't get a pay cut over the past year, but he is getting a haircut by earning ever-weaker Yankee dollars. It's been a substantial weakening: The dollar has fallen roughly 27 percent against the peso since mid-1995. Indeed, the CNMI's Filipino workers have absorbed large losses in peso-equivalent income because of the weak dollar.

Long-time readers will recall that I have long been warning about the eventual fall, if not collapse, of the greenback.

I doubt I'm alone: This may very well wind up being the year in which the entire globe calls into question the viability of the dollar. The CNMI's alien workers are at the mercy of this gig, and, to a large or small extent, many of us are as well, no matter how hard we try to avoid the situation.

As for the dollar's fall, how could I have been so right on this, and the big, blow-dried blabbermouths on slick, Big City television news shows so wrong? Well, maybe I was just lucky, but I think that my logic was, in fact, sound. Let me walk you through my logic.

Our fist step starts here: What is the dollar? It's that green stuff you put in your wallet, right? Well, for the most part, wrong. The last time I ran the numbers, cold hard cash, which is to say, currency, comprised only about 9 to 11 percent of the supply of dollars. Economists can spend entire careers arguing about the nuances of this, but I'll cut to the chase: The dollar is basically debt. As in: digits in computers. Do I mean to say that dollars are created out of thin air? Well, yes, that's exactly what I mean. Banks create money. They create it by loaning it. There are some details behind this process, but frankly, the details don't matter much.

What does matter is this profound truth: The dollar is only as sound as its foundation of debt is. And, again if you're a long-time reader, you'll recall that my other pet worry is the toxic level of debt in the United States. Government debt. Mortgage debt. Corporate debt. Household debt. Well, the current headlines about the U.S. mortgage crisis are just the tip of the iceberg.

Since financial services have been one of the only few competitive elements of the U.S. economy, I expect the falling dollar to eventually erode the strength and even the prestige of the U.S. financial services sector. Maybe New York is today's center of the financial world, but tomorrow's might be somewhere in Asia.

Even on Saipan, it's important to understand the magnitude of my concern, since it is going to rock the world's economic order: I expect that, eventually, the U.S. standard of living will fall by half, yes, fully half, from its peak point. I don't want that to happen, of course, since I'm the most red-blooded American you'll ever meet; a crew-cut, Ford-pickup truck-driving, all-American male. But what I want isn't the issue. So I have to heed the truth, and the truth is that to the extent that the U.S. has emulated the European model of bureaucratic collectivism, it will also have to emulate the European levels of economic inefficiency and standards of living. This is exactly what is happening now; the change is starting to take its bite. Americans, most of whom have no experience living in foreign lands, and therefore no basis for broad context, have no idea just how far their economic situations can fall. Well, they can fall very far indeed.

Looking back at the local picture, despite the crimp in peso remittances, the CNMI's alien workers will actually have some advantages in the coming economic turmoil. But that topic will have to wait for another column, and I promise to bring it to you soon.

Letters to the Editor

'Extend the comment period'

Having just spent 1/2 hour trying to find the difference between the proposed regulations implementing P.L. 15-108, the new Commonwealth Employment Act, that appeared in the November issue of the "Commonwealth Register" and the revised proposed regulations that appeared in the December issue of the "Register," I would urge all those affected by these regulations to demand that the Office of the Attorney General extend the time of comment beyond the normal 30-day period (which ends on Jan. 18) normally allowed for commenting on proposed regulations.

In just the first 15 pages I found any number of additions and deletions. They are not marked in any way. There is no underlining or italicizing of new parts, no line through the deleted parts. If they'd been done in the same format, it might have been possible to find the differences simply by comparing the line endings, but the second set of proposed regulations are done in a different font size, so that doesn't work either. The only way to find the changes is to compare the two versions, sentence by sentence.

The December issue of the "Register" came out only three days before the start of Christmas week. Between Dec. 21 and Jan. 10, copies were no longer available at the Attorney General's office either in Susupe or on Capital Hill, giving people limited time and opportunity to read or compare versions of the proposed regulations.

Yet, the changes appear to be substantive enough to merit a thorough re-reading of the new version.

The proposed regulations for driver education, also published in the December issue of the "Register," face similar problems. The December "Register" offers a very short time frame for comment or proposed regulations which, while long overdue, seem to suffer from micromanagement. The proposed regulations require 30 hours of "seat time," for all driver-ed courses. They require that the instructor be in the classroom the entire time class is conducted, that classes be limited to three hours each and prohibit classes in the home.

First of all, different people learn at different rates. In addition, the web offers a myriad of readily available interactive computer classes in driver education. People could save time and money and learn the basics at home. The instructor could set up a lab exercise, and let the students work it out in and on their own time.

Moreover, it doesn't make a lot of sense to define a course curriculum through law. Isn't that usually left up to PSS, NMC? There's also an American Driver and Traffic Safety Association that provides resource materials for driver education.

Anyone interested in driver education—either as instructor or student—is entitled to a full 30-days to read, do research, submit comments, on the proposed regulations governing its conduct.

Then there are the 115-page proposed amendments to the drinking water regulations.

In all fairness to the community, the business sector, the affected parties, the Attorney General should extend the time period for comments on all three sets of proposed regulations for another 30 days.

Ruth Tighe
Tanapag Village

CUC: Up a gum-stump

As many of you know, I have been on CUC's back, so to speak, for more than two years, as some of you have also. It began when CUC began its slippery slide to disaster per the previous and continuing assault of various directors, board members and political leaders, all of whom seemed to be hellbent to continue construction of the Highway to Hell—each one adding another few feet without regard to the obvious road-side signs warning of the "Dead End" ahead.

We have now very nearly reached that inevitable dead end; delivery capacity down to 43 per cent, engines failing every day, no money for repairs, maintenance or parts, oil at 20 percent higher than it was supposed to be a whole year from now, "RFP's that don't make any sense, "proposals" from the blue by persons or companies who appear to want nothing more than to capitalize on a severe "knowledge vacuum"—and not a single move afoot to indicate to the public that anything is being done—not even research!

The Governor has declared a state of emergency (nothing new here), and still nothing to show for it—just like before. Except that this time, we're (finally) told that some nine million dollars has been poured in there—for what? What has it bought? Just like the string of well-paid "consultants" whose only apparent (public) "solution" has been a recommendation to "charge the customer whatever it costs to deliver."

Well, I think it's about time the cards were put on the table. CUC could have been "fixed" (or at least far along the road to "fixed") by now IF those in charge really wanted it fixed. This is NOT the job of the Legislature, but they have been forced by circumstance to try to intervene, so far in mostly knee-jerk, band-aid laws forced by a desperate public and by an executive branch that just doesn't want it to happen.

What could have happened IF? Two years ago, our Governor started with an opportunity to take CUC in the right direction—but didn't. First, a small, but well educated "commission" (say three) should have been tasked with researching the five best ways to provide power to the islands—and given no more than 60 days to make the report. Second, another (or the same) commission should have been tasked to determine the top two of those five methods—again in 60 days of good research. By the way, all of this requires no more than a telephone and a computer. Third, official contact should have been made with those companies, organizations and federal government agencies able to facilitate actual planning. As the Chinese say: "Man who wait for roast duck to fly into mouth must wait very very long time."

In something like four to five months, a firm plan could have been developed and presented to the public—but wasn't.

What makes me think so? Because I did it! Too bad, it was all completely ignored outside of Tinian. At least the information was made available. Explorations into various alternatives, both pro and con, have been offered independently. Many in the Legislature are supporting these efforts—but it's not their job!

What is the inevitable conclusion? We are being led down the garden path—for whatever reason. Solutions ARE out there; they have been presented. They are, apparently, unwanted—for whatever reason. If this governor and the staff under his direction had actually wanted to "fix" CUC, it could have been done! I, for one, am waiting to see what the hidden agenda actually was (or is?).

Where does that leave the people of the CNMI? Up the proverbial gum stump! Will the last person out please turn off the last light (if it's still on)?

Dr. Thomas D. Arkle Jr.
San Jose, Tinian

PURSUIT

From Page 10

long-term peril. In particular, countries such as China may be prompted to sell off some or all of their substantial dollar reserves in search of a more stable currency, making it harder to finance the federal government's $9-trillion debt. We'd like to hear what the candidates would do to prevent such a run on the dollar.

Social Security

Democrat Joseph R. Biden Jr. has noted that restoring the trust fund to solvency means one of two things: cutting benefits or raising taxes. Most of the Democratic presidential candidates have opted for the latter, making an argument that payroll taxes should continue to be collected after the first $97,500 in income, the current cutoff. Having some kind of cutoff makes sense, though, because Social Security—in keeping with its mission of providing a safety net against poverty—scales back benefits for higher-wage earners. Predictably, Republican candidates praise private accounts and vow not to raise Social Security taxes, but few offer any concrete plans for tackling the solvency problem. Two intriguing exceptions are Thompson, who would slow the increase in benefits by indexing them to price inflation instead of wage inflation, and Huckabee, who would seek savings by letting retirees convert their benefits to a lump-sum payment or annuity.

The outsized baby boom generation starts hitting retirement age next year. With life expectancies and healthcare costs increasing, each year's cohort of retirees is slated to cost the government significantly more than the previous year's. We cannot keep passing that bill on to the next generation, which has a right to pursue property for its own benefit, not just its forebears'. We urge candidates to offer a plan on retiree benefits that's fair to the young too.

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Sattelite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph with gusts to 30 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph with gusts to 30 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲82° ▼75°	▲81° ▼75°	▲79° ▼75°	▲82° ▼76°	▲81° ▼74

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	▲84	▼76
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲87	▼78
Yap	Thunderstorms	▲85	▼77
Chuuk	Partly Sunny	▲89	▼77
Pohnpei	Cloudy	▲85	▼74
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	▲86	▼74
Majuro	Thunderstorms	▲83	▼75

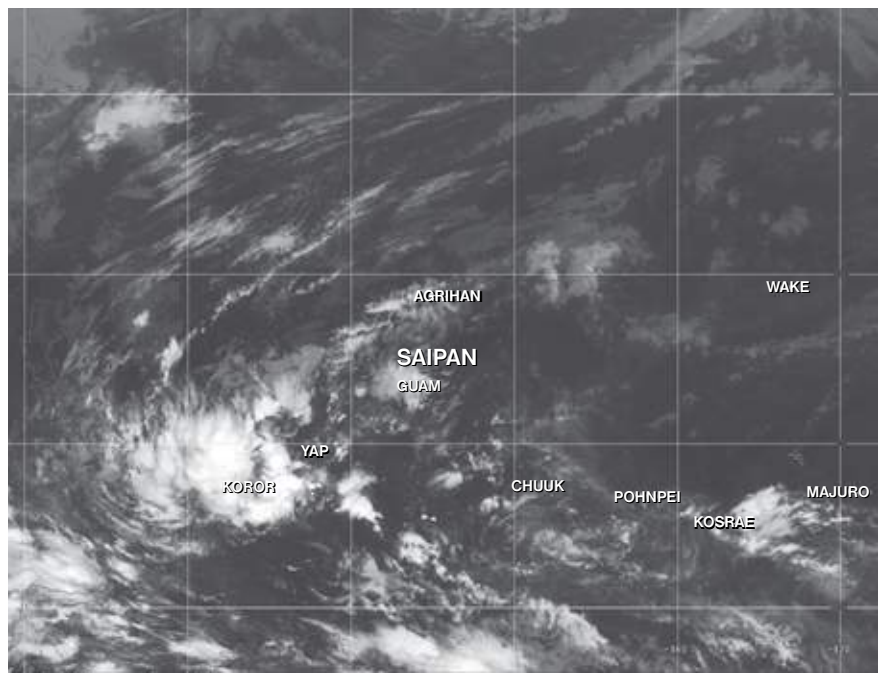
Around The Globe

Auckland	Partly Sunny	▲75	▼63
Beijing	Partly Sunny	▲38	▼24
Hong Kong	Partly Sunny	▲77	▼67
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	▲77	▼68
London	Showers	▲45	▼39
Los Angeles	Sunny	▲67	▼50
Manila	Showers	▲88	▼74
Melbourne	Cloudy	▲88	▼57
Miami	Mostly Cloudy	▲81	▼65
New York	Cloudy	▲51	▼36
Osaka	Rain	▲48	▼38
Paris	Rain	▲44	▼35
Pusan	Rain	▲47	▼31
Rome	Partly Sunny	▲55	▼44
Salem	Cloudy	▲45	▼37
San Francisco	Cloudy	▲55	▼45
Seoul	Cloudy	▲35	▼21
Tokyo	Cloudy	▲54	▼39
Washington, DC	Mostly Cloudy	▲57	▼37

Tides

Saipan Harbor		
03:27AM Today	Low Tide:	0.4 Feet
10:30AM Today	High Tide:	2.0 Feet
04:04PM Today	Low Tide:	1.2 Feet
08:46PM Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00AM, THURSDAY, JAN. 10, 2008
Western North Pacific between Equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A shear line extends eastward from near 20N145E to 15N168E to 18N180 and beyond. Cloudiness, patchy light rain and embedded shower activity are found along and up to 200 miles north of this boundary. A near-equatorial trough stretches east-southeast from 6N130E to end at EQ153E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms associated with this feature are found between 1N and 14N from 130E to 148E. This area includes Koror, Yap and Guam. Trade-wind convergence over Pohnpei, Kosrae and Majuro is creating scattered showers between 2N and 8N from 154E to 180.

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:46AM	6:03PM
Saturday	6:46AM	6:04PM
Sunday	6:46AM	6:05PM
Monday	6:46AM	6:05PM
Tuesday	6:47AM	6:06PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	08:43AM	08:32PM
Saturday	09:23AM	09:25PM
Sunday	10:01AM	10:18PM
Monday	10:39AM	11:11PM
Tuesday	11:19AM	

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

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For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

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- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, CIC Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contribution are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

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- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

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ADVERTISING For inquiries contact 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 11, 2008

DEPARTURES

Saipan-Guam

CO9317	5:00am	5:50am	1,2,4,5,6,7
CO9597	8:30am	9:20am	1,2,5,6
CO9313	8:30am	10:00am	3,4,7 via Rota
CO9601	12:30pm	1:20pm	Daily
CO9603	3:30pm	4:20pm	Daily
CO9605	6:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
CO9599	9:30pm	10:20pm	2,3,4,5,6,7

Saipan-Seoul

OZ 604	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ 604	2:40am	6:30am	2,3,4,5,6,7
OZ 606	3:30pm	7:00pm	2,4,6,7

Saipan-Busan

OZ 608	4:00am	7:35am	1,4,5,7

Guam-Manila

CO 891	6:00am	10:30am	3 via Yap and Koror
CO 893	6:30am	8:05am	6
CO 893	8:25am	10:00am	2
CO 893	5:50pm	9:10pm	5 via Koror
CO 933	8:00pm	9:40pm	Daily
PR 111	6:00am	7:45am	1,2,4,6,7

Saipan-Manila

CO 895	4:45pm	6:35pm	6
CO 895	6:45pm	8:35pm	3

Saipan-Nagoya

NW 078	8:30am	11:10am	Daily

Guam-Nagoya

CO 971	7:45am	10:30am	1,2,4,5,6,7
NW 023	4:15pm	7:05pm	Daily
CO 904	4:35pm	7:25pm	Daily

Saipan-Narita

NW 078	8:30am	1:30pm	Daily via Nagoya
NW 075	4:55pm	7:30pm	Daily

Guam-Narita

JO 982	4:15am	7:00am	Daily
CO 961	7:20am	9:55am	Daily
CO 006	1:00pm	3:45pm	Daily
JO 942	3:30pm	6:15pm	Daily
NW 081	3:55pm	6:50pm	Daily
NW 073	4:15pm	7:00pm	Daily
CO 963	4:50pm	7:30pm	Daily

Saipan-Osaka

NW 083	4:30pm	7:25pm	Daily

Guam-Hongkong

CO 910	7:45pm	10:40pm	1,5

Saipan-Guanzhou

CZ 3008	5:00am	8:00am	2,6

Saipan-Rota

CO 9313	8:30am	9:05am	3,4,7

Rota-Guam

CO 9313	9:30am	10:00am	3,4,7

Saipan-Shanghai

MU 590	4:20am	7:00am	2,6

ARRIVALS

Guam-Saipan

CO 9316	2:30am	3:20am	1,4,5,6,7
CO 9316	3:30am	4:20am	2
CO9596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
CO9598	10:15am	11:45am	1,2,6 via Rota
CO9600	10:45am	11:35am	3,4,5,7
CO9602	2:00pm	2:50pm	Daily
CO9604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily
CO9606	8:00pm	8:50pm	2,3,4,5,6,7

Seoul-Saipan

OZ 605	9:00am	2:30pm	2,4,6,7
OZ 603	7:40pm	10:00am+1	7
OZ 603	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1,2,3,4,5,6
OZ 607	6:50pm	2:50am+1	3,7 via Busan
OZ 607	7:30pm	2:50am+1	4 via Busan

Busan-Saipan

OZ 607	9:30pm	2:50am+1	3,4,6,7

Manila-Guam

CO 894	11:20am	4:55pm	2
CO 894	7:45pm	1:20am+1	6
CO 892	9:45pm	5:25am+1	3 via Koror
CO 892	9:45pm	6:30am+1	3 via Koror and Yap
CO 892	10:10pm	5:30am+1	5 via Koror
CO 934	11:10pm	4:40am+1	Daily
PR 110	10:15pm	4:00am+1	1,3,5,6,7

Manila-Saipan

CO 890	9:15am	2:55pm	6
CO 890	11:45am	5:35pm	3

Nagoya-Saipan

NW 077	8:45pm	1:10am+1	Daily

Nagoya-Guam

NW 024	10:00am	2:40pm	Daily
CO 970	11:30am	4:00pm	Daily
CO 905	8:25pm	12:50am+1	1,3,4,5,6,7

Narita-Saipan

NW 076	10:35am	3:05pm	Daily
NW 077	6:15pm	1:10am+1	Daily via Nagoya

Narita-Guam

JO 941	9:30am	2:05pm	Daily
NW 074	9:45am	2:25pm	Daily
CO 962	11:05am	3:35pm	Daily
CO 007	5:15pm	9:50pm	Daily
NW 082	8:30pm	1:15am+1	Daily
CO 964	8:40pm	1:15am+1	Daily
JO 981	9:30pm	2:05am+1	Daily

Osaka-Saipan

NW 084	10:40am	3:10pm	Daily

Hongkong-Guam

CO 910	11:40pm	6:20am+1	1,5

Guanzhou-Saipan

CZ 3007	8:00pm	4:00am+1	1,5

Rota-Saipan

CO 9598	11:10am	11:45am	1,2,6

Guam-Rota

CO 9598	10:15am	10:45am	1,2,6

Shanghai-Saipan

MU 589	8:05am	3:00am+1	1,5

(Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; PR: Philippine Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CA: Air China; NW: Northwest; JO: Japan Airlines; OZ: Asiana. ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

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Sale starts on Jan. 11 to 16, 2008

Mens Nautica Tee Shirts Printed Logo $19.99

Mens Rancher S/S Poly Shirt $14.99

Ladies Kahibo Missy S/S Blouse $9.99

Ladies Calgary Jeans Original Rise $12.99

Boys S/S Polo Shirt $7.99

Boys Gym Shorts $8.99

Girls Round Neck Top $3.99

Girls Jade Pants $19.99

Barney Washcloth 8 pack $2.99/ea.

Best Buys!

Rival 1 1/2 Qrt. Crock Pot $15.99

New Arrivals!

Best Buys!

Salton Rice Cooker 7 cup $25.99

New Arrivals!

Best Buys!

Toastmaster 2 Slice Toaster $12.99

New Arrivals!

Best Buys!

Steam Dry Iron $11.99

New Arrivals!

Toastmaster Sandwich Maker $15.99

WF Child Cold & Allergy Elixir 4oz. $2.79/ea.

WF Cotton Swab 300ct. $1.99

Sunsilk Shampoo or Conditioner 12oz. $3.99

Toastmaster Mini Food Chopper $13.99

Toastmaster 12 Cup Coffeemaker $18.99

Ultra Brite Tootpaste 6oz. $1.50/ea.

Sunsilk Moousse $3.79/ea.

Shower Curtain with Oversize Brass Rings $13.99

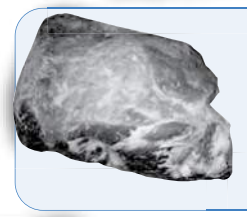
Assorted Velour Beach Towel $6.99

Jumbo Shower Caddy $1.39

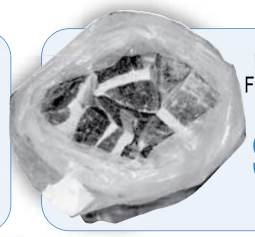
LOW LOW PRICE

Supermarket

Danish Pork Spare Ribs 10 lbs. $14.99/cs.



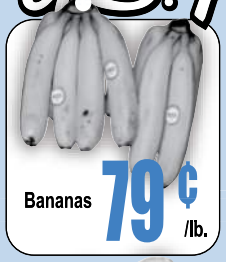
New Zealand Boneless Beef Clod $1.99/lb.



New Zealand Beef For Stew Family Bag /lb $14.99/ea.

U.S.P

Look for these and more great savings throughout our store!



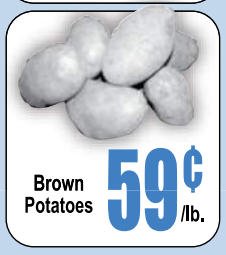
Bananas 79¢/lb.

Extra Large White Eggs 1 Dozen $2.59/dz

Cello Red Apples 3lb. Bag $3.59/bg.

Cello Carrots 75¢/bg.

Sleeved Celery 69¢/lb.



Brown Potatoes 59¢/lb.

Yellow Onions 59¢/lb.

Oranges 99¢/lb.

Now Available!
Japanese Tangerine, Fuji Apples and Nashi Pears

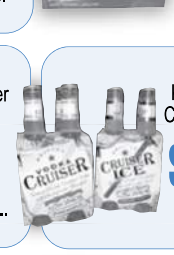
Visit us for more savings at our Produce section!

Chicken Leg Quarters 22lb $16.99/cs.

New Zealand 1/2 Shell Mussels 2.2lb. $5.99/ea.

Asahi Sugar 4.4 lb $1.79/ea.

Hafa Adai Water 24/350ml $6.50/cs..



Kristov Vodka Cruisers 275ml. $1.49/ea.

Soft N Gentle Bathroom Tissue 24 Roll $9.99/ea.

Diamond G Calrose Rice 50lb. $20.99/bg.

Sunwhite Calrose Rice 50lb. $17.99/bg.

Golden Monkey Jasmine Rice 50lbs. $18.99/bg.

Come for more selections!

Joeten Shopping Center

P.O. Box 500137 Saipan, MP 96950 - Tel. 234-6446/48 Fax. 234-5876

Thank you for shopping at all Joeten Stores: Joeten Shopping Center Susupe, Hafa Adai Shopping Center, Dandan Shopping Center and Big Bargain Chalan Piao

We accept major credit cards - We welcome Foodstamps - We reserve the right to limit quantities We are not responsible for any typo errors

Aiko's SNACK BAR

Accepts Phone Orders

Lunch is available Monday through Saturday from 10:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Please call 234-6445 for daily specials!

MICROL TOYOTA

SPECIALS OF THE WEEK

2005 OPTRA 4DR.
Auto, Silver
Stock: R07-034F
Mileage: 14592
License #: ACD-020
$10,999

2005 EPICA 4DR.
Auto, Beige
Stock: U07-075R
Mileage: 10098
License #: ACA-204
$8,999

USED CARS

STOCK	YEAR	MODEL	TRANS.	MILEAGE	COLOR	LICENSE #	PRICE
TOYOTA SEDANS							
CONSIGNMENT	2006	CAMRY XLE 4DR	AUTO	28890	L. BLUE	ABX-669	18,999
U07-098T	2004	CAMRY 4DR	AUTO	27675	SILVER	ACE-355	13,799
R07-025F	2004	CAMRY LE 4DR	AUTO	43820	BEIGE	ACC-860	13,999
R07-016F	2005	MATRIX	AUTO	19890	GRAY	ABV-759	11,299
R07-022B	2005	MATRIX	AUTO	27658	SILVER	ACG-443	12,099
GM CARS							
U08-002P	2006	AVEO 4DR.	AUTO	9706	BLUE	ACE-586	8,999
U07-123P	2006	AVEO 4DR.	AUTO	9500	GRAY	ACE-688	8,999
R07-031F	2005	AVEO 4DR.	AUTO	68515	YELLOW	ABY-169	8,999
R07-035F	2005	AVEO 4DR.	AUTO	63367	WHITE	ACD-026	8,699
R07-013F	2005	AVEO HATCHBACK	AUTO	39164	ORANGE	ADO-022	7,899
R07-023F	2005	AVEO HATCHBACK	AUTO	32635	WHITE	ABX-679	9,599
TOYOTA TRUCKS							
R07-036B	2003	TACOMA 4X4 D/CAB	AUTO		RED	ABR-739	15,999
R07-038F	2004	TACOMA 4X4 XTRACAB	AUTO	49609	BEIGE	ABV-159	11,899
R07-026F	2004	TACOMA 4X2 REG/CAB	MANUAL	46550	WHITE	ACA-308	9,999
U07-021F	2004	TACOMA 4X2 REG/CAB	MANUAL	15382	BEIGE	ACA-820	10,999
OTHER CARS & TRUCKS							
U07-106P	2004	HONDA CIVIC DX DR.	AUTO	50416	SILVER	ADF-401	8,999
U07-107P	2004	HONDA CIVIC DX DR.	AUTO	48755	SILVER	ADF-421	8,999
U07-108P	2004	HONDA CIVIC DX DR.	AUTO	45099	SILVER	ADF-431	8,999
U07-109P	2004	HONDA CIVIC DX DR.	AUTO	43869	SILVER	ADF-371	8,999
U07-034T	2000	NISSAN MAXIMA GXE 4DR.	AUTO	68648	WHITE	ACT-812	8,399
U07-104T	2003	NISSAN MURANO SE	AUTO	32000	PEWT	ABZ-615	16,799
U07-095T	1999	MAZDA MILLENIA 4DR. SEDAN	AUTO	91014	SILVER	ABP-583	7,999
U07-118T	2004	MAZDA MX3 4DR. SEDAN	AUTO	33366	SILVER	ADH-312	12,799
CONSIGNMENT	2001	FORD ESCAPE	AUTO	39530	BLUE	ABW-458	10,899
VANS							
U07-096	2000	SIENNA XLE	AUTO	92766	GRAY	ACO-561	8,999
SPORT UTILITY							
U07-064T	2001	4RUNNER 4WD	AUTO	56882	CHAMPAIGNE	ABY-153	13,599
U07-050T	2002	RAV4 4DR. 4WD	AUTO	39182	WHITE	ABW-677	12,799
U07-007T	2004	RAV4 4DR. 4WD	AUTO	41649	BEIGE	ACB-455	14,999
U07-082P	2004	RAV4 4DR. 2WD	AUTO	68919	GRAY		13,599

MICROL TOYOTA
Corner Beach Road and Chalan Mnsr. Guerrero in San Jose
Telephone: 234-5911 | Fax: 234-6514 | www.microlsaipan.com

TOYOTA ACDelco

Aqua Resort Club launches salad and dressing contest

By CLARISSA DAVID
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The merriment of the season has ended, and another year has begun. As has been what seemed like a habitual practice, many people make and try to keep—albeit with much effort and difficulty—their New Year's resolution to shake off those extra pounds gained during the holidays.

Keeping one's health resolution doesn't have to sound so hard at all. One way to really achieve those fitness and health goals is to go lean and green and stick to a low-calorie, highly nutritious meal like salad.

Aqua Resort Club has even come up with an exciting promotion to entice people to stick to that healthy resolution while bringing out their culinary and creative sides.

Costa Terrace Restaurant introduces "In the Name of Salad," a Salad and Dressing Recipe Contest open to anyone who has prepared an original, unpublished salad or dressing recipe.

Yoshimi Yanagisawa, ARC's Sales Manager for Food and Beverage Department, said that they will be accepting recipe entries beginning today until Jan. 17, 2008.

Amateurs, professionals, the young and young-at-heart are all welcome to participate in what would be a first of its kind recipe contest on island.

Acting F&B Manager Mayeth De Guzman added that aside from the recipes being original, the ingredients to be used should be available or are grown on-island.

From the entries, ARC will choose three recipes each for salad and dressing as finalists for the contest. The finalists will be chosen based on availability of ingredients on island, taste, presentation, originality, and creativity.

These recipes will then be prepared by ARC's brilliant chefs and served in their buffets from Jan. 21 until the end of the month.

Lunch buffet customers will have the chance to taste these recipes and will decide which among the entries will win Best Salad and Best Dressing.

The entries with the most votes will be declared as winners. The winning salad and dressing recipes will be featured regularly in ARC's lunch buffets. The creators of the winning recipes will win an overnight stay for two at Aqua Resort Club and have the chance to make use of the hotel's exclusive amenities for its customers.

Consolations prizes await the non-winning entries.

"We want to feature that (as an) island thing to our customers from Japan, Korea and other countries. We want to feature more of Saipan, like knowing that it's coming from this island," Yanagisawa adds.

Furthermore, De Guzman said that this contest will be able to "promote locally grown vegetables and ingredients."

For those interested in joining this healthy contest, submit your very own recipes of salad and dressing by e-mail to yoshimi@aquaresortsaipan.com or fax to 322-1220, Attention: F&B Department.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Important dates for NMC's Spring 2008 semester

English Placement Test:

- 01/11/08, 1pm-4pm, Rm. D1
- 01/16/08, 5pm-8pm, Rm. A9
- 01/18/08, 1pm-4pm, Rm. A9

New Student Orientation 01/11/08 9am and 5:30pm

Spring 2008 Registration For:

- May 2008 Graduating Candidates 01/14/08 9am – 6pm
- Students who place in EN 101 or higher 01/14/08 9am – 6pm
- Students enrolling in EN 070 to EN 074 ONLY 01/14/08 9am – 6pm

OPEN Registration for Spring 2008, 01/15-18/08, 9am – 6pm

LATE Registration for Spring 2008, 01/19/08 9am – 12pm

First Day of Instruction, 01/22/08

Last Day to Withdraw from Courses 03/07/08

Last Day of Instruction, 05/10/08

For more information, contact the Office of Admission and Records at 234-5498 Ext. 1540. **(NMC)**

Math placement test

Jan. 16, 10am – 12 noon Room: A-9

This is the last Math Placement Test for the Spring 2008 semester.

Things to bring:

- A valid photo ID (Drivers License, passport or School ID)
- Pen or Pencil
- Calculator (Optional)

The Math Placement Test fee has been waived for individuals enrolling at NMC for Spring Semester 2008. All test takers must go to Office of Admissions and obtain a Placement Test/Power Campus ID form. NMC students are not allowed to take the placement test more than once. The only exception to this condition is for NC students who have NOT taken a math class within one year of taking the math placement test.

No reservations needed – first come first served. No admittance to the testing room will be allowed after the starting times listed above.

If you have any questions, call the Sciences, Mathematics, Health & Athletics Department at (670) 234-5498 Ext. 1200 or 1212. ***(NMC)***

MMAC Team Captain's meeting

The Marianas March Against Cancer Committee is inviting all previous and interested MMAC Team Captains or their representatives to attend the Team Captains' meeting on Monday, Jan. 14, 2008, at 5:30pm at the Aquarius Beach Tower, for the 2008 Marianas March Against Cancer.

If you or anyone you know has been affected by cancer, make the time and effort to attend this meeting as the 2008 MMAC is coming soon and the support of the community is vital in the battle against this terrible affliction. For more information, e-mail Chris A. Concepcion at chrisaconcepcion@gmail.com. ***(PR)***

MMAC committee meeting

The Marianas March Against Cancer Committee is inviting all committee members or their representatives to attend the MMAC Committee meeting on Wednesday, Jan. 16, 2008, at 12pm, at Pierre's Restaurant in Garapan. Important information will be discussed at the meeting. For more information, e-mail Chris A. Concepcion at chrisaconcepcion@gmail.com. ***(PR)***

Hopwood Junior High events

- Jan. 11, Students will be released at 12:30pm. We will be issuing the second quarter report cards from 2:30 to 5:30pm
- Jan. 17, PTSA meeting in the school's cafeteria from 6pm to 7pm
- Jan. 21, Dr. Martin Luther King Day (no classes)
- Feb. 4-5, School-level Professional Development Days (no classes)

MHS calendar of events

- Jan. 16, Report Card Distribution/Open House 4pm-6pm (Please pick up report cards from Homeroom Teachers) MHS Campus (Students will be released at 1pm)
- Jan. 21, Martin Luther King Day (no classes)

For questions and concerns contact 237-3206. ***(PR)***

‘Cervical cancer screening saves lives’

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN
rianne_pangelinan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Saipan Mayor Juan B. Tudela joins Department of Public Health Secretary Joseph Kevin P. Villagomez, Deputy Secretary for Public Health Administration Lynn Tenorio and DPH Program Coordinator Margarita W. Torres-Aldan, Commonwealth Cancer Association, Department of Public Health staff, DPS, and Southern Community Wellness centers staff during the proclamation signing declaring Jan. 13-26 as 2008 Cervical Cancer Awareness Weeks at the Mayors Office in San Antonio Thursday morning.

With the growing need to educate women on cervical cancer, Mayor Juan B. Tudela, in collaboration with the Commonwealth Cancer Association and the Department of Public Health, declared Jan. 13-26 as 2008 Cervical Cancer Awareness Weeks for the CNMI capital.

Tudela endorsed the fight against cervical cancer during a ceremony at the Office of the Mayor yesterday morning.

Tudela urged all women in the CNMI to discuss a screening program with their private doctor or any health provider so they will become aware if they are at risk of getting cervical cancer.

“Women, please remember that cancer generally develops slowly and in many cases, can still be prevented if detected early,” Tudela said.

Before the signing of the proclamation, two candles were lit to remember the two latest victims of cervical cancer on Saipan.

According to Department of Public Health Secretary Kevin Joseph Villagomez, the candles were two candles too much. He expressed hope to bring the number down to zero with the many women vaccinated through the HPV campaign.

Deputy Secretary for Public Health Administration Lynn Tenorio read the proclamation aloud before the endorsement.

She said that too many young women in the CNMI have died because they did not get a simple but important test—an annual Pap Smear.

There have been a total of 108 cases of invasive cervical cancer diagnosed in the CNMI since 1992. “Of this number, there were 25 deaths since 1993,” said Tenorio.

According to the National Program of Cancer Registry, of the 11,892 women in the United States who were diagnosed with cancer in 2004, 3,840 have died from the sickness.

Tenorio further read from the proclamation that local statistics show that the rate of cervical cancer victims among Chamorro and Carolinian women is more than three times higher than the U.S. or Hawaii.

“This means that cervical cancer rates for the CNMI are twice as high as Hawaii or the U.S. mainland,” Tenorio read.

“The Office of the Mayor of Saipan, and the Commonwealth Cancer Association recognize the impact cervical cancer has made in our community, and have partnered with the CNMI Department of Public Health to bring more women in for Pap Smear,” she said.

According to the information pamphlets that were handed out at the ceremony, there are no early symptoms of cervical cancer, and only when the cancer develops that woman might experience some discomfort.

Cancer generally develops slowly and in many cases, can be prevented through Pap Smear testing and treatment of pre-cancerous conditions.

The signing of the proclamation was also to indicate a full support of collaborative efforts from the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the CNMI Department of Public Health, the Commonwealth Cancer Association, and Office of the Mayor.

This year’s theme—“Real Women Do It! Cervical Cancer Screening Saves Lives”—aims to educate all women in the CNMI on the need to undergo regular screening for the disease.

Reyes: No controversy on teacher rep post

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN
rianne_pangelinan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Fitial administration has downplayed the controversy being generated by the election of the teacher representative to the Board of Education, saying that the incumbent seems to be the only one stirring things up.

Press Secretary Charles P. Reyes, Jr. said, “I am not sure there is a controversy here… Apparently, the only person who has an issue or who perceives a controversy is Mr. [Ambrose] Bennett, who reportedly wants to be reappointed teacher rep.”

“The teachers and Public School System evidently do not see a problem and the administration is confident that PSS and the teachers are capable of properly addressing the issue,” Reyes added.

Bennett, who is the current teacher representative, has submitted certified questions to the CNMI Supreme Court, reportedly to settle the “controversy surrounding the Board of Education teacher representative post.”

Bennett had also informed Gov. Benigno R. Fitial about the “certified questions” and expressed hope that Fitial will agree that an interpretation by the Supreme Court is the most logical means for making sure the CNMI Constitution is being followed to the letter.

“Given the submission of these questions, it is in the best interest of all stakeholders in the appointment process to allow time for the court to respond before any further actions are taken to elect or appoint new teacher rep,” said Bennett.

He said that he submitted the questions in his “official capacity” which makes it “imperative that I remain in an acting position until the court has ruled and a new teacher rep can be selected.”

Bennett reiterated the need for the governor to take action on his temporary appointment before the swearing in on Jan. 14 of the new members to the Board of Education.

“I hope you will agree this is the best method to bring about an end to what has become a traditional dispute over the appointment of the BOE Teacher Rep,” Bennett said.

One of the questions Bennett addressed to the high court was, “Who is responsible for conducting the selection process in the absence of an ‘exclusive bargaining representative of teachers’?”

Reyes said that if the Constitution requires a gubernatorial appointment, “I am sure the governor will endorse the selection of the teachers through a democratic vote.”

He added that Bennett “may not be a completely disinterested party.”

USS Ohio makes historic visit to Guam

SANTA RITA, Guam—The USS *Ohio* (SSGN 726) arrived on Guam Jan. 10 for scheduled maintenance and port visit. The arrival is of historical significance since this is the first time Guam has welcomed a submarine of its kind.

Ohio is the first of four Trident-missile submarines being converted to carry guided missiles and Special Operations Forces. This conversion is a major step forward in the Navy's ability to fight the global war on terrorism.

The other submarines chosen for conversion are USS *Michigan* (SSGN 727), USS *Florida* (SSGN 728), and USS *Georgia* (SSGN 729).

The new class of submarines provides a powerful, non-provocative forward presence that can respond quickly to emergent needs. The converted platform combines the speed, stealth, range, and flexibility of a nuclear-powered submarine with the unprecedented undersea payload.

In December 2005, *Ohio* completed conversion to a guided-missile submarine capable of carrying more than 150 Tomahawk cruise missiles and more than 60 SOF members for extended periods. It rejoined the fleet in February 2006. *Ohio* is homeported at Naval Base Kitsap, Bangor in Silverdale, Wash.

Additional information about the submarine, its crew, and the boat's conversion can be found at https://www.ohio.navy.mil. ***(USN)***

Upgrades to Guam wharf completed

SANTA RITA, Guam—A ribbon-cutting ceremony scheduled today, Jan. 11, at 10am, will commemorate the completion of upgrades to Bravo Wharf on U.S. Naval Base Guam.

The completed project will provide Naval Base Guam with the capability and flexibility to host a broader range of naval vessels to include but not limited to USS *Frank Cable* (AS 40), Ticonderoga-class cruisers and fast-attack submarines.

In addition, Naval Base Guam can now support newly-retrofitted Ohio-class guided-missile submarines, such as the USS *Ohio* (SSGN 726), which arrived on island Jan. 10 for scheduled maintenance.

The ceremony, hosted by Naval Facilities Engineering Command Marianas, will mark the Navy's receipt of Bravo Wharf from the construction contractor.

The $50.7-million construction contract, which includes upgrades to both Alpha and Bravo wharves at Polaris Point, was awarded to Black Construction Corp. in March 2006. The construction work encompassed the reinforcement of existing underwater pilings, the extension of existing wharves, and upgrades to water distribution and fire-protection systems. The project also incorporated dredging of the channel entrance and turning basin at inner Apra Harbor.

Upgrades to Bravo Wharf were completed in November 2007. Construction work at Alpha Wharf is scheduled for completion this summer. ***(USN)***

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION

EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

NOTICE OF AUCTION
IN THE
COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

The NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION, hereinafter referred to as NMHC, as auctioneer and seller hereby gives notice that all of the rights, title, and interests of the following described real properties situated in Garapan, Saipan, CNMI will be sold at an auction:

LOT NO. 01:

Lot No. 003 D 10 (formerly Block 1 Lot 10), containing an area of 1.022 Square meters, more or less, as more particularly described in Official Cadastral Plat No. 003 D 00 registered at Mariana Islands District Registrar's Office as Document No. 689 on the 19th day of February, 1971, the original of which was registered with the Land Registry on the 1st day of March, 1971, as Document No. 689, and containing an area of 1,022 square meters.

Minimum Bid. The minimum bid for the property listed in this notice shall be $100,000.

LOT NO. 02

Lot No. 003 D 16 (Formerly Block 1 Lot 16), as shown on the Division of Lands and Surveys Official Cadastral Plat Number 003 D 00 dated February 19, 1971, the original of which was Registered with the Land Registry on the 1st day of March, 1971, as Document No. 869, and Containing an area of 1,022 square meters, more or less, together with the improvements and Fixtures located thereon and therein and the appurtenances and all the rights, title and interest of, in, and to the land lying in all streets, highways and rights of ways abutting on or appurtenant to said premises.

Minimum Bid. The minimum bid for the property listed in this notice shall be $72,000.00.

The auction will be open to the general public and will be held at NMHC's Conference Room, Garapan, Saipan, at **10:00 a.m., on Tuesday, January 15, 2008**, subject to the following announced terms and conditions:

1. Reserve. The auction sale shall be held with reserve.
2. Rights and Duties of Auctioneer. Consistent with the custom and usage and applicable law of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands governing auction sales with reserve, auctioneer and seller shall have the following rights and duties in conducting the auction sale:
   a.) To withdraw the property listed for sale in this announcement before sale or before a bid for such property is accepted.
   b.) To adjourn the sale without notice at any time before any specific property is sold, without incurring any liability whatsoever thereby; and
   c.) To reject any and all bids.
3. Bids. Tentative bids may be submitted in advance for any and all of the property listed in this notice. Such bids shall not be binding, except that the highest of such bids will automatically be considered the opening bid for the item. Bids may be entered in person, in writing, or by telephone to Joshua T. Sasamoto, Corporate Director, Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, P.O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514, Phone: 234-6866, Fax: 234-9021; or to Vicente T. Salas, Esq., P.O. Box 501309, Saipan, MP 96950-1309, Phone: 234-7455, Fax: 234-7256.
4. Deposit; Payment. A deposit of ten percent (10%) of the purchase price must be paid on the day of the auction sale. The remaining balance will be due within ten (10) days of the auction sale. All payments must be made by cash, cashier's check or credit card. Failure to make payment of the remaining balance within ten (10) days will result in forfeiture by the buyer of the ten percent (10%) deposit, and any and all of the buyer's rights, title and interest in any of the aforementioned property will revert to NMHC.
5. Change of Terms. Auctioneer and NMHC reserve the right to change any of the terms of conduct and enforcement of sale by announcement, written or oral, made before the auction sale or at the commencement thereof, and such change or changes, by virtue of this clause, shall be binding on any buyer by constructive notice.
6. **Inspection and No Warranty. Bidders are cautioned to inspect the title and property; contact NMHC for scheduled viewing and inspection times. The interests of the property are being sold "AS IS" and without warranty. Failure to inspect the real property will not constitute a ground for any claim, adjustment or rescission by any buyer.**

Dated this 11th day of December, 2007.

/s/
JOSHUA T. SASAMOTO, Corporate Director
Northern Marianas Housing Corporation

War artifacts sold by Solomons national museum

HONIARA, Solomon Islands (Solomon Star/PIR)—National Museum Director Lawrence Foana'ota has played down reports that war plane wrecks sent to Australia from Ballalae in the Solomon Islands was done under controversial deals.

Four warplanes were removed from Ballalae last year and shipped to Australia early last month despite widespread criticisms.

The Solomon Islands Ports Authorities last week confirmed that the wrecks were sent to Australia without official complaints.

Ninamo Otuana, who claimed to have registered title over the island, [sought] court action which resulted in the holdup of the wrecks at the ports area for weeks before they were exported.

Otuana said the removal of the war wrecks was contentious.

He claimed that few high profile people benefited from the export under the name of FAMOA Trust Board.

However, Foana'ota told Solomon Star yesterday that there was nothing wrong with the removal of the war relics.

He said the action was legal and in accordance to the War Relics Act.

He said the removal and sale of the wrecks was done under an ongoing project called "The World War II Memorial Museum Project".

"The plan to set up a WWII museum started in 1996 but there were no funds and it is a very expensive exercise to collect and maintain these relics," he said.

Therefore, he said it was agreed that they sell some of these war wrecks to get funds to start this museum.

Foana'ota said the recent shipment of war wrecks is the first carried out as a test to see the cost involved and if people overseas are interested in the relics.

He said communities in the Shortland Islands benefited from some SB$50,000 [US$7,175] under the first deal, which saw the removal of four wrecks from the island.

PACIFIC BRIEFS

Hawaiian Air to begin Honolulu-Manila Service

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (RNZI/PIR)—Hawaiian Airlines has announced it will start operating roundtrip flights to Manila in April. The first flight out of Honolulu is set for April 14 and the first out of Manila is April 17. Hawaiian plans to operate four flights per week between Honolulu and Manila. Hawaiian's CEO, Mark Dunkerley, says the company has been energised by the community's enthusiastic response to the new service. Roundtrip fares went on sale today starting at $848.

Eight cruise ships to visit Solomons in 2008

HONIARA, Solomon Islands (Solomon Star/PIR)—Eight cruise ships will be visiting Solomon Islands this year. Destination Solomons Travel and Tours Limited managing director Wilson Maelaua said these cruise ships are scheduled to visit the country at different times of the year. These ships include the Spirit of Oceanus, Silver Whisper, Orion, MS Statendam, Doulos, Spirit of Enderby and Clipper Odyssey. Maelaua said some of these boats are scheduled to make two visits this year. The first ship Spirit of Oceanus will be arriving this month. According to the copy of the 2008 Cruise ship schedule provided by the Destination Solomons Limited, Spirit of Oceanus will arrive on January 17. Maelaua said this ship will visit Isabel Province and Tikopia.

Aussie navy ship to monitor Japan whaling

MELBOURNE, Australia (Radio Australia/PIR)—New Zealand's Green Party wants the government to send navy frigates into the Southern Ocean in case there are clashes between Japanese whalers and protest ships. The Greenpeace ship, Esperanza, is reported to be looking for the whalers and says it expects to find them within days. A second protest ship, the Sea Shepherd, is on its way to the hunting area. The Green Party says frigates are needed in case there are dangerous incidents. The National Party has urged the Government to send an Air Force Orion to monitor the whalers. Meanwhile, Australia says it is sending a ship this week to monitor the Japanese whaling fleet. Customs officers will be on board to monitor whaling practices for the purposes of any possible future legal action by the Australian Government.

Regulators take aim at Tahiti smokers

PAPEETE, Tahiti (Tahiti-presse/PIR)—The New Year began with good news and bad news for smokers in Tahiti. The good news is: you can continue smoking in bars and restaurants. The bad news is: but maybe not for much longer.

Although smoking in bars and restaurants is no longer legal throughout France since Jan. 1, Tahiti has yet to adopt the same prohibition. But it may not be far away from doing so because there is legislation in the works.

So in a few months, but certainly after the runoff election on Feb. 10 for the 57 French Polynesia Assembly seats, smoking in public places in Tahiti and Her Islands may also become illegal.

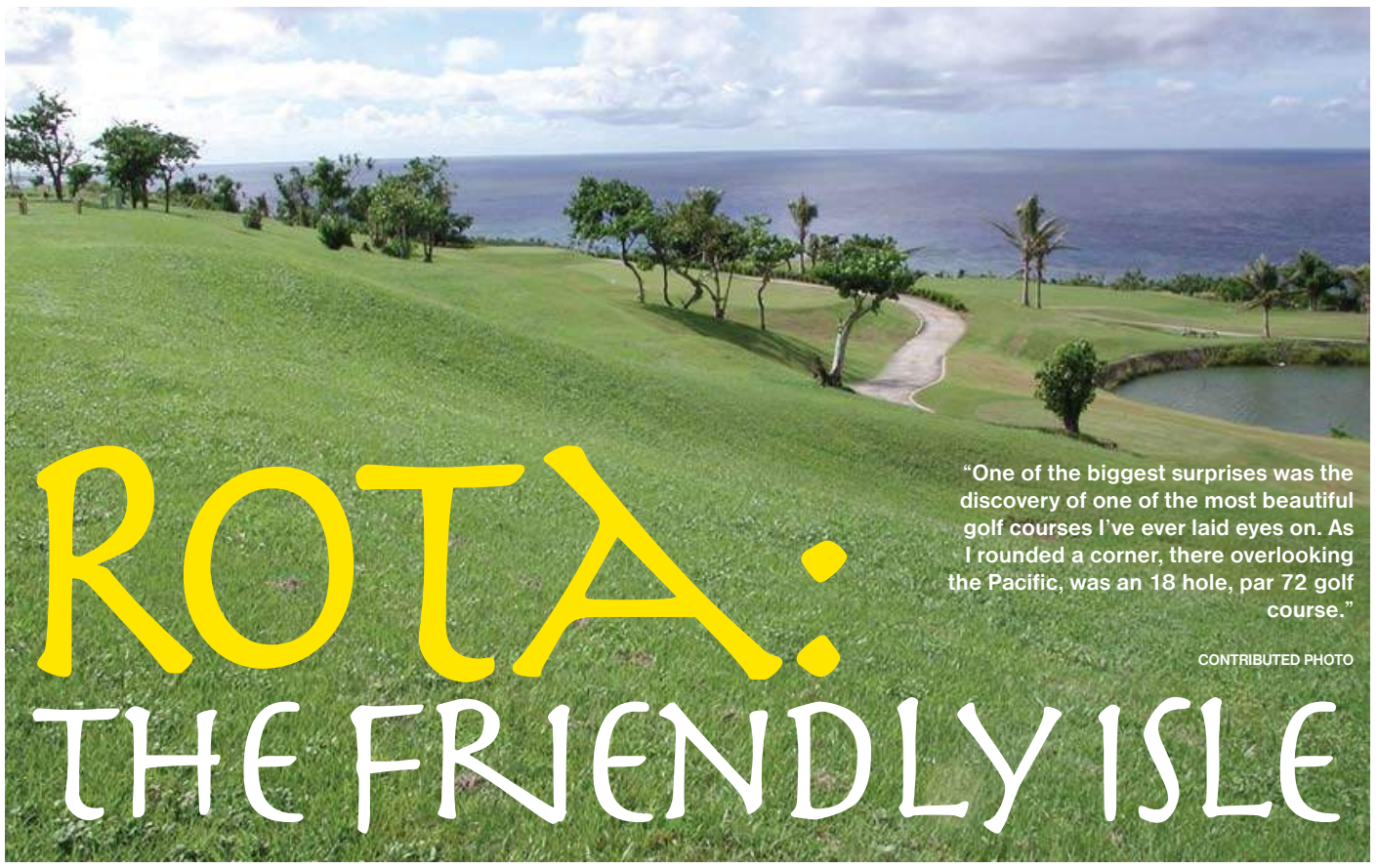
Although the French no-smoking law applies to all French overseas departments, French Polynesia is an overseas community, formerly known as a territory that has its own competence in the area of public health.

However, Tahiti's public health officials have been working for several months on a local legislative project that is modeled on the French law. "The trend is really to try and do the same thing as in France," said Dr. Marie-Françoise Brugiroux, head of the French Polynesia Center for Drug and Alcohol Dependence Consultation.

Public Health Department lawyers are working on the legislative project, which they hope can be presented to Tahiti's new government by at least May 31, the 20th Annual World No Tobacco Day sponsored by the World Health Organization.

Although Tahiti adopted a ban against smoking in public places in 1988, that ban does not apply to bars and restaurants, Dr. Brugiroux said.

While some bars and restaurants in Papeete have already taken the initiative to ban smoking, such is not the case with the vast majority of such establishments.



ROTA: THE FRIENDLY ISLE

"One of the biggest surprises was the discovery of one of the most beautiful golf courses I've ever laid eyes on. As I rounded a corner, there overlooking the Pacific, was an 18 hole, par 72 golf course."

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

By JEFFREY GROBERMAN
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Editor's Note: Jeffrey Groberman is a travel feature writer based in Vancouver. He has been to Saipan several times during his travels in Micronesia. The following story was published in the major papers across Canada two years ago as part of a series Groberman wrote on "Islands in the Sun" and he is making it available to the Saipan Tribune. *The series also contained articles on Yap and Palau.*

"So you're coming to Rota for the triathlon," the older smiling gentleman asks pleasantly.

I explain that I would compete—except I have a bit a problem with some of the events: namely the running, swimming, and cycling. If they want to build a triathlon that includes a three-legged race, a sack race and a potato and spoon event, I'm their man.

I'm one of three passengers on a plane that seats 40 about to take off for the 15-minute flight from Saipan to Rota. Rota is part of the Northern Mariana Islands situated midway between Guam and Saipan. You can actually see it from either island. The Northern Marians are about a six-hour flight from Hawaii or four hours from Tokyo.

Rota is only about 10 miles long by four miles wide, has a population of 3,000, and nobody goes there except twice a year: once in October for a feast commemorating a little known saint, and in November athletes from kilometers away come to compete in the Rota Triathlon.

I'm met at the airport by a smiling driver who again asks if I'm there to compete in the triathlon as he takes me to my lodgings at the Coral Garden Hotel. It's clean, a little threadbare, but has a million dollar view of the ocean and Mt Taipingot, nicknamed Wedding Cake Mountain for its layered appearance. The desk lady smiles as she hands me my room key and wishes me good luck in the triathlon. I smile back.

I'm beginning to understand why the guidebook calls Rota the "friendly isle." Everybody smiles. If you walk down the road into town, everyone waves and smiles. The main town on Rota has the colorful name of Songsong. Unfortunately the name should be changed to "Sadsong" since, for the most part, the town consists of about two blocks of ramshackle buildings, many of them abandoned. What Songsong does have is one of the best beaches on the island, right in the center town, giving the best vantage to view spectacular sunsets.

Ignoring Songsong, Rota is a beautiful Island, consisting of pristine empty beaches and rolling hills covered in lush vegetation. You can drive around the whole island in about an hour or so. One of the biggest surprises was the discovery of one of the most beautiful golf courses I've ever laid eyes on. As I rounded a corner, there overlooking the Pacific, was an 18 hole, par 72 golf course. The manicured fairways lined with flower laden hibiscus trees—and not one single golfer in site. I was reminded of *Field of Dreams*—"If you build it, they will come." At any moment I expected to see the likes of Ben Hogan, Sam Snead, and Bobby Jones come walking out of the lush surrounding jungle.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
The author has his picture taken at a beach on the beautiful island of Rota.

One of the reasons that visitors do come to Rota is for the diving. Rota's crystal clear water boasts visibility of over 100 feet underwater. While there are several dive shops on the island only one, Dive Rota, caters to English speaking divers, and that's why I find myself standing there early one morning waiting for it to open.

IF YOU GO TO ROTA...

North West Airlines and Continental Airlines flies to Saipan and Guam from Seattle, with a stop in either Hawaii or Tokyo. Prices can very from about US$1,700 to $2,400 in peak season.

Jeff's Tip #1: Try and go during low season (i.e. October through early December). I found an amazing unadvertised discounted fare of only $425 U.S. return! Rota is a 15-minute flight from either Saipan or Guam.

Jeff's Tip #2: Fly to Saipan rather than Guam and avoid an overnight stopover in expensive Tokyo.

While I'm waiting, a member of the local constabulary rides up on a bike to see what I'm doing loitering outside the closed dive shop. We chat for a bit and I admire his 18-speed bike. He asks if I have a bike. I reply that I have a 40-year-old Raleigh three-speed; since three speeds are all I need. I had no idea that this innocent comment was going to cause me so much trouble later

When the dive shop opens I discover that I'm the only English-speaking diver that day. The owner makes arrangements for me to join a group of Japanese divers with a different dive operator.

As I arrive I hear the other divers talking excitedly in Japanese and pointing at me. I can make out the word "Canadian." I ask one who speaks a little English what all the excitement is about.

Evidently they're excited about meeting the crazy Canadian who will be doing the Triathlon on an antique bicycle!!! News travels fast on Rota—especially when it's delivered by the police on an 18-speed bike. Given the language problem, I haven't a hope explaining to them that I'm not racing. I adopt the classic Rota response—I just smile.

That night as I enter the local bar I'm greeted with much bowing and ceremony by the Japanese and other contingents. I sadly inform them that I'd just been informed that Typhoon Nanmadol, which had just passed through earlier in the week, swept the container holding my bike off the deck of the freighter bringing it from Canada. Without my bike I won't be able to race this year!

Rota isn't known as the "friendly island" for nothing. A hasty meeting is held and somehow they come up with another bike; but I explain it wouldn't be the same without my trusty three-speed; nevertheless, I'm given an official competitor's jersey. "Perhaps," they ask, "I'll come back next year?"

Perhaps I will.

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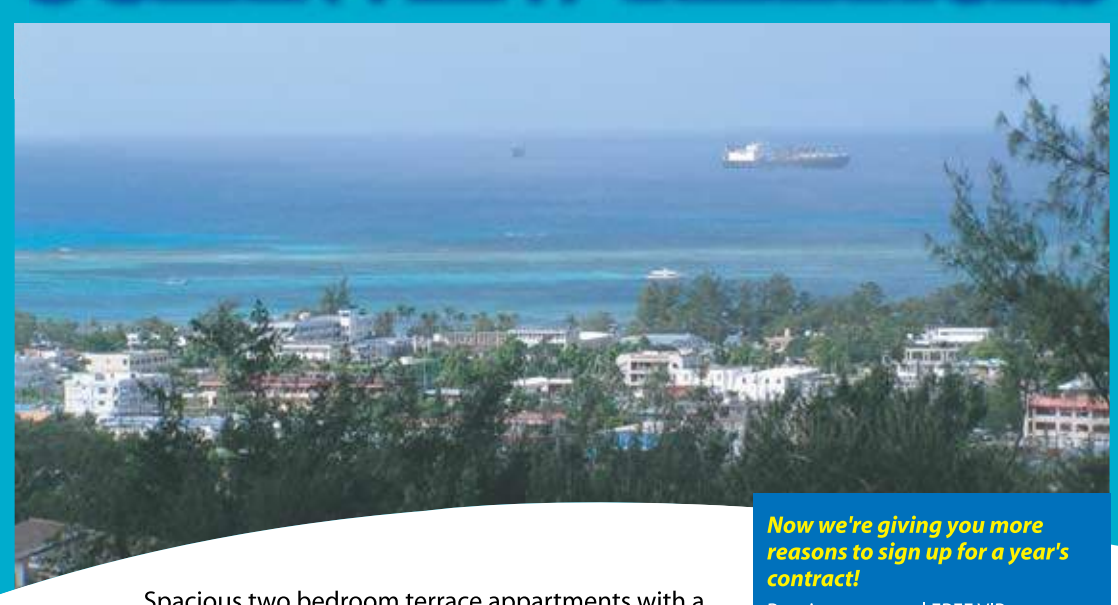
OCEANVIEW TERRACES



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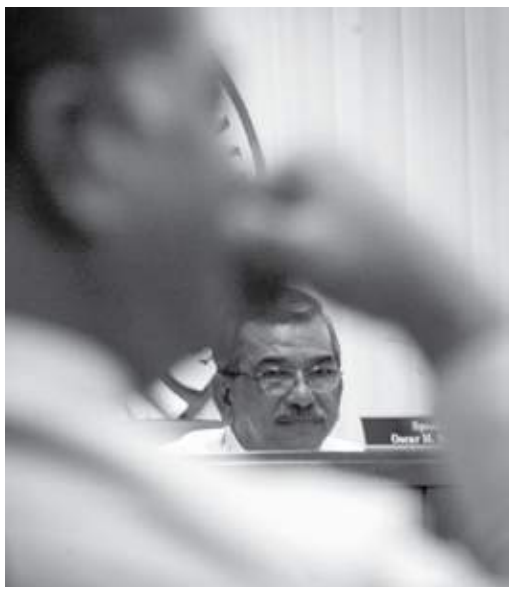
Island Snapshots

FINAL SESSION JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Members of the 15th Legislature stand as they say a prayer led by Speaker Oscar M. Babauta and House Minority Leader and incoming Speaker Arnold I. Palacios during Wednesday's last session at the House of Representatives on Capital Hill.



JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Speaker Oscar M. Babauta looks at House Minority Leader and incoming Speaker Arnold I. Palacios during the 15th Legislature's final session at the House of Representatives on Capitol Hill Wednesday.

GOODBYE! JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

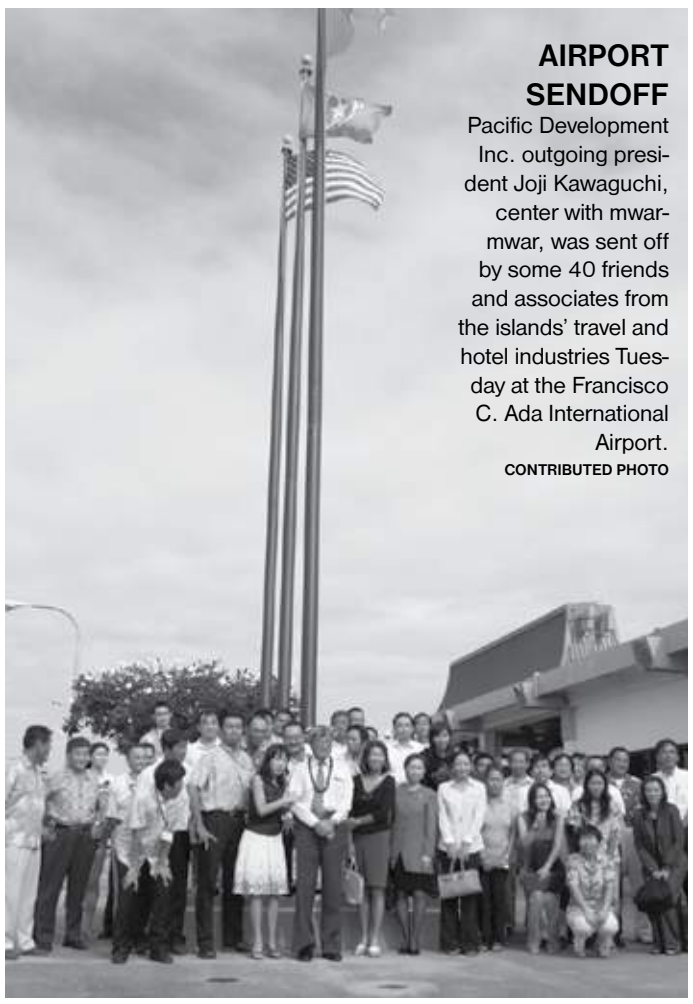
Departing tourists get on the bus at the lobby of Hafadai Hotel in Garapan.

ISLAND VISITORS CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Bishop Tomas A. Camacho greets one of the 11 students from the Catholic Archdiocese of Busan, South Korea, who are spending the month of January at Mount Carmel School to practice and improve their English language skills and forge relationships with students at Mount Carmel. The students are staying with host families from the Korean Catholic community who have children enrolled at the school.

NMC TRAINING JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Guam Community College Academic vice president Dr. Ray Somera, facilitates the Northern Marianas College PROAC/SLOCIP Assessment Training at the Saipan World Resort Royal Taga Hall Wednesday.



AIRPORT SENDOFF

Pacific Development Inc. outgoing president Joji Kawaguchi, center with mwar-mwar, was sent off by some 40 friends and associates from the islands' travel and hotel industries Tuesday at the Francisco C. Ada International Airport.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

LUNCH SESSION JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Legislative bureau staff gather for lunch after the 15th Legislature's last session at the House of Representatives on Capital Hill Wednesday.

ZONING TRAINING JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

A participant asks a question during the Zoning training held at the Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe on Tuesday. The seminar was intended to acquaint all stakeholders on the regulations governing the newly enacted Zoning Law.

AIRPORT EXHIBIT

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Tasi Tours president Seiji Sato receives an appreciation plaque in behalf of Tasi Tours and Transportation, Inc. from MVA chair Jerry Tan, Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, HANMI chair Lynn Knight and MVA managing director Perry Tenorio.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial delivers his remarks during the opening of the "Nature Photo Exhibit" inside the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport Thursday morning.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Tasi Tours president Seiji Sato gestures while giving his remarks during the opening of the "Nature Photo Exhibit" inside the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport Thursday morning.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

HANMI chair Lynn Knight gives her remarks during the opening of the "Nature Photo Exhibit" inside the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport Thursday morning.

RAISING AWARENESS

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Deputy Secretary for Public Health Administration Lynn Tenorio and DPH Program Coordinator Margarita W. Torres-Aldan read the proclamation declaring Jan. 13-26 as 2008 Cervical Cancer Awareness Weeks at the Mayor's Office in San Antonio Thursday morning.

15TH LEGISLATURE ENDS

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Rep. Manuel A. Tenorio delivers his farewell remarks while Reps. Benjamin B. Seman, Joseph P. Deleon Guerrero and Ramon A. Tebuteb listen during Wednesday's final session at the House of Representatives on Capital Hill.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Rep. Jacinta M. Kaipat gives her parting remarks while Vice-Speaker Justo S. Quitugua listens.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Speaker Oscar M. Babauta talks to House Minority Leader and incoming Speaker Arnold I. Palacios during the 15th Legislature's last session at the House of Representatives on Capital Hill.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Reps. Francisco S. Dela Cruz, Edwin P. Aldan, Crispin M. Ogo and Jesus SN Lizama share a light moment during the 15th Legislature's last session at the House of Representatives on Capital Hill.

Polly Omechelang of NMC CREES and Evelyn Sablan of DPL light candles in memory of those who died of cervical cancer during the proclamation signing declaring Jan. 13-26 as 2008 Cervical Cancer Awareness Weeks at the Mayor's Office in San Antonio Thursday morning.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Business

Oil stays near $96 in Asian trading

SINGAPORE (AP)—Oil prices held steady Thursday in Asia after falling overnight on a U.S. government report that the country's stockpiles of gasoline grew last week.

But the U.S. Energy Department's Energy Information Administration also reported that the nation's crude oil inventories fell to their lowest level in more than three years.

U.S. gasoline stocks rose 5.3 million barrels, or 2.6 percent, to 213.1 million barrels during the week ended Jan. 4. Analysts had forecast the report would show they had climbed only 1.6 million barrels.

Crude inventories, on the other hand, fell 6.8 million barrels, or 2.3 percent, to 282.8 million barrels. The drop was more than 8 times the 800,000 barrels that analysts surveyed by Dow Jones Newswires had forecast.

Light, sweet crude for February delivery rose 20 cents to $95.87 a barrel in Asian electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange by midmorning in Singapore. The contract on Wednesday lost 66 cents to settle at $95.67 a barrel.

The fall in crude stockpiles marked the eighth consecutive weekly decline, dragging supplies to their lowest point since October 2004.

Analysts said efforts by Gulf Coast refineries to minimize their inventories, which are subject to year-end taxes, were contributing to the drop in crude oil stocks.

The weekly report also showed that inventories of distillate fuel, which includes diesel and heating oil, rose 1.5 million barrels to 128.7 million barrels. Analysts had expected a drop of 300,000 barrels.

U.S. refineries ran at an average 91.3 percent of total capacity, the report said, an increase of 1.9 percentage points that beat the expected gain of 0.1 percentage point.

Brent crude futures for February delivery rose 30 cents to $94.67 a barrel on the ICE Futures exchange in London.

Stocks finish higher in late rally

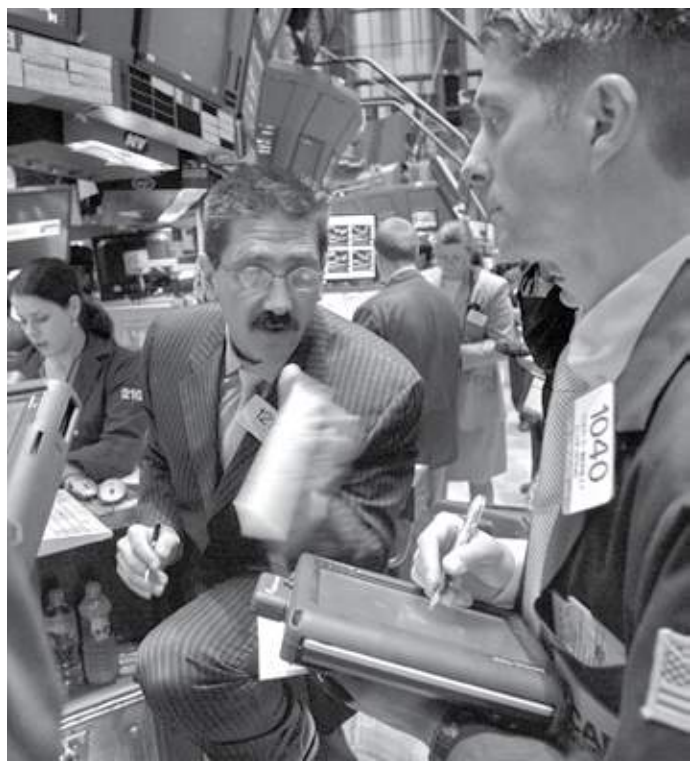
NEW YORK (AP)—Wall Street finished a back-and-forth session sharply higher Wednesday as investors sought bargains while also contending with concerns about the strength of the economy and upcoming corporate results.

The Nasdaq composite index showed its first gain in nine sessions and the Dow Jones industrial average gained more 200 points in the final 90 minutes of the session to end nearly 150 points higher.

Wednesday's session was as choppy as Tuesday's, when stocks tumbled amid concerns about the economy. Unease about the economy has caused intense market volatility since the start of the year, with stocks rising on hopes for more interest rate cuts, and plunging as investors doubt that will be enough. The market is also worried about how fallout from the mortgage and credit crisis has affected corporate earnings.

The Dow, which had been down nearly 90 points in the session, finished up 146.24, or 1.16 percent, to 12,735.31.

Broader stock indicators also rebounded. The Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 18.94, or 1.36 percent, to 1,409.13, and the Nasdaq composite index, which had been down more than 1 percent during the session, finished up 34.04, or 1.39 percent, at 2,474.55.



AP

Specialist Richard Wey, left, directs trading at his post on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange Tuesday Jan. 8, 2008.

Advancing issues outnumbered decliners by about 3 to 2 on the New York Stock Exchange, where consolidated volume rose to 5.11 billion shares from 4.62 billion shares Tuesday.

The rebound Wednesday wasn't large enough to pull the Dow from the realm of a correction, which is a 10 percent drop from a recent high. The blue chip index is still off 10.1 percent from its Oct. 9 high. The S&P 500 is now down 9.97 percent from its high.

The Russell 2000 index of smaller companies rose 7.26, or 1.03 percent, to 712.12.

Overseas, Japan's Nikkei stock average closed up 0.49 percent. Britain's FTSE 100 fell 1.32 percent, Germany's DAX index dropped 0.86 percent, and France's CAC-40 fell 1.10 percent.

Target CEO Ulrich to retire

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—Target Corp. said Wednesday that President Gregg Steinhafel would take over for retiring CEO Bob Ulrich, a long-expected handoff that comes just as the nation's second-largest retailer hits a rough patch.

Target said Ulrich would step down as CEO on May 1, soon after he turns 65. He will remain as chairman through Jan. 31, 2009.

Steinhafel

Steinhafel, 52, has a reputation for being a frequent visitor to Target stores, and for a sharp eye for the style factor in the goods they offer. He has been with Target's predecessor company since 1979, became executive vice president of merchandising in 1999, and, in a signal that he was on his way toward the CEO's chair, was named to the board last year.

Target already had a reputation for stylish-but-cheap goods when Steinhafel became an executive, but he perfected the strategy, said Howard Davidowitz, chairman of Davidowitz & Associates Inc., a retail consulting and investment banking firm in New York.

"He was a key player in building one of the greatest retail machines in the United States. He was a key in one of the finest executions of a focused strategy" in retail, Davidowitz said.

He said Steinhafel helped Target thrive in the face of Wal-Mart's growth during years when most other discounters went under.

"Wal-Mart destroyed everybody. Destroyed them. Now who is left standing? Nobody's left, except Target," Davidowitz said.

Ulrich started as a merchandising trainee in 1967 at Target's predecessor, the Dayton Corp., which had opened its first Target discount store five years earlier. Ulrich held the chairman and CEO posts for 14 years. The company said that during his tenure, it has nearly tripled its sales and U.S. stores, and profits have jumped almost ninefold.

The company didn't make either Steinhafel or Ulrich available for interviews.

"During Bob's tenure, Target has achieved outstanding financial results and become one of the most recognized and valuable brands in the world," Steinhafel said in a prepared statement. "I am fortunate to have had the opportunity to learn from one of the best leaders in the retail industry."

Target and its share price have stumbled in recent months, though. Activist investor Bill Ackman has been increasing pressure on Target to boost its share price. Sales in the first week after Thanksgiving were disappointing, and it has said that December sales "are likely to fall well short" of the level needed to grow fourth-quarter profits above last year's. Target is due to report official December sales numbers on Thursday.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Countrywide home loan delinquencies rise

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Countrywide Financial Corp., its stock pummeled this week by rumors of bankruptcy and lackluster housing market forecasts, said Wednesday the percentage of borrowers who missed payments on home loans last month rose, signaling worsening trouble for the nation's largest mortgage lender and for the entire mortgage sector. The company also reported that it had funded $23.5 billion in loans in December - a steep decline from $42.8 billion in the year-ago period. "Their new business is down roughly 50 percent," said Sean Egan, managing director of independent ratings firm Egan-Jones Ratings Co. in Philadelphia. "The market is fairly concerned whether the company is going to be able to correct the fundamental problems that it's faced with," he said.

Alcoa 4Q profit jumps 76 percent

PITTSBURGH (AP)—Alcoa Inc., the world's third-largest aluminum maker, kicked off earnings season by posting a 76 percent profit gain for the fourth quarter as the pending sale of its consumer and packaging businesses offset lower prices. The Pittsburgh-based company said net income soared to $632 million, or 75 cents per share, for the three months ended Dec. 31, from $359 million, or 41 cents per share, during the same period a year earlier. The earnings included restructuring and tax gains totaling $323 million, or 38 cents per share, mostly from the company's recent agreement to sell the packaging and consumer units. Lower metal prices and the exclusion of results from a soft alloy extrusion business, which is now part of a joint venture, pulled down quarterly revenue to $7.39 billion from $7.84 billion last year.

Delta union chief: Combination close

ATLANTA (AP)—A combination involving Delta Air Lines Inc. may be close, the head of the carrier's pilots union said in a letter to rank-and-file members Wednesday. Lee Moak, chairman of the union's executive committee, said in the letter that "consolidation may indeed be at our door." He added later in the letter, "While the bankruptcy threat is now behind us, the potential for a consolidating event is every bit as real." Moak said union leaders are meeting in Atlanta this week in part to discuss "the fact that our company may soon be involved in some form of industry consolidation." Moak noted in the letter that fuel prices are at record highs and Delta's stock price since the company emerged from Chapter 11 last April has fallen dramatically, at one point as much as 45 percent. Its shares soared nearly 15 percent in trading Wednesday.

STOCK Portfolio

ASIAN MARKETS

AUSTRALIA	6,147.300 Down 12.200 (-0.20%)
HONG KONG	27,369.84 Down 246.01 (-0.89%)
JAKARTA	2,830.2629 Up 44.638 (+1.60%)
TOKYO	14,478.88 Down 120.28 (-0.82%)
K. LUMPUR	1,491.66 Up 1.92 (+0.13%)
MANILA	3,454.60 Up 38.52 (+1.13%%)
SINGAPORE	3,899.884 Down 12.286 (-0.31%)
SEOUL	1,831.85 Down 12.62 (-0.68%)
BANGKOK	807.10 Down 13.37 (-1.63%)

LEADING INDICATORS

DOW	12,735.31 +146.24
NASDAQ	+146.24 +34.04
S&P	1,409.13 +18.94

MONEY MARKET

Australian Dollar	1.1324
British Pound	0.5112
Canadian Dollar	1.0097
Chinese Renmbi	7.2697
Euro	0.6809
Hong Kong Dollar	7.8055
Indian Rupee	39.305
Indonesian Rupiah	9437.5
Japanese Yen	109.715
Malaysian Ringgit	3.265
New Zealand Dollar	1.2922
Philippine Peso	40.662
Singapore Dollar	1.4314
South Korean Won	935.6
Swiss Franc	1.1152
Taiwan Dollar	32.482
Thailand Baht	29.345

In U.S. dollar terms

Source: Associated Press

Get to the bottom of boss' philosophy on staying late

By LILY GARCIA
SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON POST

A reader writes:
I work for a company as a middle manager and right now I am supervising only one person in my section. I usually work 8-5 but stay late if I have to or sometimes take my work home. My boss has a philosophy that no matter what, managers have to come early and leave late even if there is no urgent need. She has reminded me a couple of times that I need to quit the habit of leaving at 5 p.m. and stay late. A couple of other managers do stay late (2-3 hours) and she always mentions them.

My argument is that I would love to stay late if I have to and there is an urgent need, otherwise I will leave at the prescribed time so I can spend some time with my family (she is a single person with no family here). Apparently, we are not on the same page yet. What should I do?

You are doing the right thing by explaining your reasons for not putting in unnecessary face time. It is unfortunate that your manager does not appreciate the wisdom in your logic, but all is not lost.

I recommend that you get to the underpinnings of your manager's philosophy. There are a number of possible reasons why she might think that staying late is appropriate for managers regardless of workload, including:

1. Making a display of solidarity with other team members who are staying late, which arguably promotes good morale and boosts productivity;

2. Being available to support and answer the questions of team members who are staying late, or being available to manage technical emergencies that might otherwise arise;

3. Modeling desired behavior, by which I mean showing those who report to you that long hours are expected;

4. A sense that it is not fair for other managers to go home early when she has to stay late;

5. An immature concept of what it means for a manager to put in a full day's work.

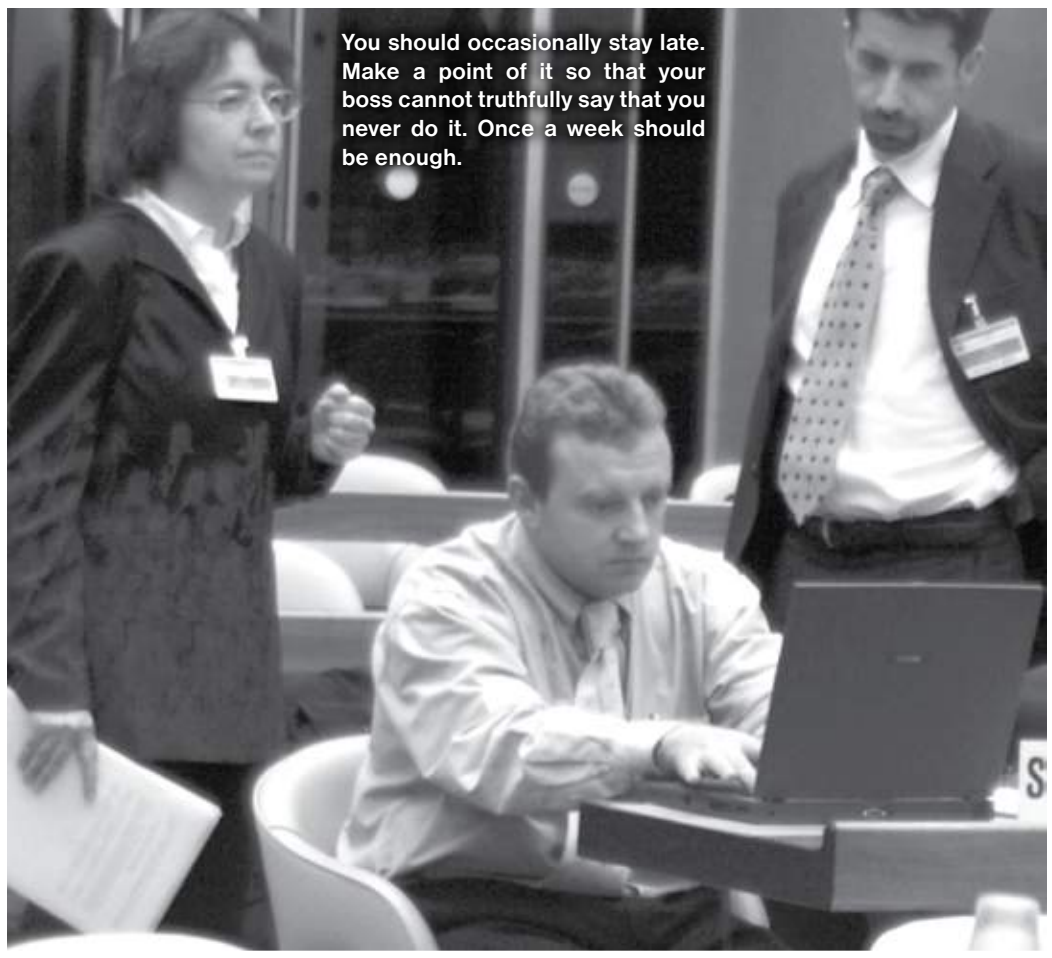
Short of staying late, there is little that you will be able to do to placate your manager if her philosophy is based on reason No. 4 or No. 5. However, there is much that you can do to reassure her if her philosophy is based on Nos. 1, 2 or 3.

First, you should occasionally stay late. Make a point of it so that your boss cannot truthfully say that you never do it. Once a week should be enough.

Second, make it clear to your boss that you are on call and available 24/7 to answer questions and provide assistance to your team and the larger department. To support this, change your voice mail to include a number at which callers can reach you after hours. Place an auto-responder containing similar information on your e-mail when you leave for the day, and be sure to answer a few e-mails from home during the evenings. Also, call occasionally after hours to check in on your direct report and make sure that your boss somehow finds out about it. Finally, call your boss after hours now and then to check in and make sure that she does not need anything from you.

These are not empty political gestures. Your objective is to instill in your boss some degree of confidence in your availability and commitment to the operation. If the use of a few well-placed theatrics makes you uncomfortable, remember that the payoff will be greater autonomy and less scrutiny.

Garcia, whose column regularly appears on WashingtonPost.com, has offered employment law and human resources advice to companies of all sizes for 10 years.


You should occasionally stay late. Make a point of it so that your boss cannot truthfully say that you never do it. Once a week should be enough.

Resume Rx: State the destination, then highlight the milestones

By MARY ELLEN SLAYTER
(C) 2008, THE WASHINGTON POST

Naomi Tranen graduated from college in May and wants a job in which she helps people directly, perhaps in health care or education.

The biggest issue is that it isn't immediately clear from Tranen's resume what type of job she is looking for, said Malcolm Munro, a career coach in Germantown, Md.

Narrowing her choices is crucial, he said, "because without a target, it's hard to highlight her best skills and abilities."

Then she "should research employers who provide the work environment, corporate culture and social responsibilities that interest her."

After that, she should begin quantifying and qualifying her experience to match those jobs. "Employers want to hire problem-solvers, money-makers and value-adders with good people skills," he said.

"Her experience is listed more as a job description than a record of stellar achievements. Anyone who has been entrusted as a lifeguard and health-care provider with a passion for Habitat for Humanity probably has those abilities, but she'll need to give some specific examples of accomplishments if she wants potential employers to take notice."

He said, "Naomi's resume is a great start, and with some brainstorming and careful reflection, I'm sure she'll develop a winning resume that highlights her multiple skills, abilities and talents."

DOLLARS AND SENSE

Locking mailbox helps prevent identity theft

BY David Uffington
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It used to be that thieves would cruise for mail to steal only at certain times of the year—holidays and when tax refund checks were expected.

Now it's all year long that mail in unsecured mailboxes is at risk.

What do thieves want from your mailbox? Here's a brief list: pre-approved credit applications with your name already imprinted, holiday and birthday checks and cash (greeting-card envelopes are easily identifiable), credit-card statements, tax statements and 1099 Forms, your annual Social Security statement or monthly check, paychecks and new bank checks.

If you don't have a secured mailbox (such as the "gang"-type in apartment complexes), you might want to consider buying and installing a locking mailbox. Locking mailboxes have a slot for the mail carrier to drop the mail, which can't be retrieved until you open the box with a key.

Make sure the type you buy is approved by the Postmaster General. Learn about the height and size requirements.

If you live in a development with association rules that dictate what your mailbox must look like, investigate the "safe within a mailbox" type. Your mail is secure in a lockable box inside your mailbox but still meets association rules for appearance. Ask at your post office whether this type is acceptable. The mail carrier has to make two separate movements: shut the lockable box and close the mailbox door. Another style of "safe within a mailbox" has a small slot for mail to be inserted, but there's no room for packages.

Here are some more tips:

■ Look for a mailbox that you can install yourself, to save money.

■ If you're on a busy road, look for a mailbox with the lock in the back.

■ If you receive a lot of packages and books, be sure the mailbox you buy is large enough to hold them all.

■ If installing a locking mailbox is out of the question, consider renting a box at the post office.

Locking mailboxes aren't cheap, and you can spend a bundle on a fancy one (you can even find one with a keypad instead of a key), but the price of a locking mailbox can save you countless hours of grief if thieves steal your information and your identity.

David Uffington regrets that he cannot personally answer reader questions, but will incorporate them into his column whenever possible. Write to him in care of King Features Weekly Service, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475, or send e-mail to columnreply@gmail.com.

A reality check for nonprofit candidates

By MARY ELLEN SLAYTER
(C) 2007, THE WASHINGTON POST

The nonprofit sector is one that both private sector and government workers can find mysterious. They like the idea of putting their skills to use for the greater good of society but aren't quite sure how to make it happen.

"Change Your **Career**: Transitioning to the Nonprofit Sector," by Laura Gassner Otting, answers that question (Kaplan Publishing, $16.95). It challenges myths about the nonprofit hiring process, helps workers weigh the pros and cons of nonprofit jobs and outlines a strategy for breaking into the sector. Stories from professionals are sprinkled throughout. (Kaplan Publishing is a division of The Washington Post Co.)

Her advice is sound. Besides her own experiences working in the nonprofit and political worlds, Gassner Otting is president of the Nonprofit Professionals Advisory Group, a search firm based in Newton, Mass., that she founded.

The book handily breaks down some of the most common myths about working in the nonprofit sector.

The biggest is that you'll starve if you take a nonprofit job. It depends on the work you do and, more importantly, the work the organization does. People often don't realize how diverse nonprofits are. The broad category includes schools, hospitals and trade groups, as well as activist and cultural organizations.

Organizations fighting for civil rights, human rights, women's rights or animal rights tend to pay less, Gassner Otting points out. "In fact, it's not uncommon to find nonprofits that fight against poverty paying their own employees impossibly low salaries," she writes. (Or offering hypocritically poor benefits. I have one friend who works for a women's rights group who is postponing having a child while she pushes for her employer to provide its mostly female staff with maternity leave.)

But it doesn't have to be like this, Gassner Otting says. For better pay and benefits, look to research institutions, foundations, colleges and universities. Bigger organizations tend to pay better than smaller ones. And people with specialized skills, such as infinance or information technology, earn more than those working the phone banks.

The book also walks workers through the process of deciding whether nonprofit work is right for them through a series of questions. My favorite: "If someone gave you $5,000 a month to do whatever you wanted, what would it be?"

Gassner Otting cautions workers about thinking that nonprofit work represents a way to escape hard work and office politics. If anything, the nonprofit world can be trickier to navigate because so much of the reward is emotional, not monetary. The lofty goals of the organization can quickly lead to burnout. "This great purpose often places a heavy weight—and even, sometimes, a chip—on the shoulders of those doing the work," she writes. And even if you maintain a positive attitude, chances are someone in your office won't.

Once you get past the attitude issue, there's the matter of your background. "The first thing most hiring managers look at when they open your resume is your current job and current company. This will most likely be the first strike against you," says Gassner Otting. "The second thing is your education; if it is solely business-related, it may be your second strike. Strike three may be a lack of numbers showing relevant scale or scope of your projects and accomplishments; a huge difference between what you've done and what you want to do ... won't make you look like a good fit for the position."

Language matters. Think stakeholders, not shareholders. Donors, not investors. Clients, not customers. The book translates these and other more subtle differences for the would-be nonprofit worker. Get that, and you're on your way to finding a nonprofit job you love.

Nation

Pollsters try to figure out Clinton upset

By ALAN FRAM
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

AP

Democratic presidential hopeful Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton, D-N.Y., reacts with her husband, former President Clinton and daughter, Chelsea at her Democratic primary election night victory rally in Manchester, N.H., Tuesday, Jan. 8, 2008.

WASHINGTON (AP)—Was it an eleventh-hour tide of sympathetic women, people reluctant to say they were not backing a black candidate or problems with the polls themselves? For whatever reason, late public opinion surveys showed Barack Obama cruising to a triumph in the New Hampshire Democratic primary.

Pollsters and other analysts floated all kinds of theories on Wednesday, a day after Hillary Rodham Clinton salvaged her candidacy with a startling 39 percent to 36 percent victory over Obama. Muddling the hand-wringing, most of those same polling organizations, using the same techniques, forecast John McCain's 5-percentage point win with admirable accuracy.

"I don't think anybody knows for sure the problem at this point," said Mark Mellman, a Democratic pollster who is not working for a presidential candidate.

Polling of Democrats just before Tuesday's vote gave little warning of the New York senator's comeback, with most underestimating her strength. A USA Today-Gallup Poll gave Obama a 13-percentage point lead, putting her at just 28 percent. Another by CNN, local television station WMUR and the University of New Hampshire had the Illinois senator up 39 percent to 30 percent.

It was not just the pollsters. Journalists covering the candidates on their final full day of campaigning described larger, more energized crowds attending Obama's events than Clinton's. And from the Clinton camp came word of campaign shake-ups, as well as a moist-eyed candidate vowing to struggle on regardless—an appearance some analysts said helped humanize her and win supporters.

Exit polls conducted for The Associated Press and the television networks offered no obvious clues. Interviews with voters in the Democratic primary showed those who said they had made their choice within the last three days—including those who said they had decided on the final day—split about evenly between Clinton and Obama.

Women gave Clinton her victory, a surprise because Obama had edged her among women in the Iowa caucuses five days earlier. The USA Today-Gallup Poll showed the two dividing New Hampshire females about evenly, suggesting a last-minute Clinton upsurge among them, but exit polls did not bear that out.

New Hampshire women deciding in the last three days broke for her over Obama by 44 percent to 36 percent—not much different from her margin among females who chose earlier. There were also no apparent Clinton advantages among late decision-makers who were low-earning or less educated, other important parts of her base.

Some think changes in voters' attitudes occurred on Monday and Primary Day itself—when most survey organizations had stopped polling. The tight timeframe after Iowa gave New Hampshire voters little time to digest Obama's newfound momentum, and many of their decisions may have come in the final hours, despite what they told exit pollsters.

"We were finished polling Sunday night, and there's no way we could have detected that," said Andrew Smith, director of the University of New Hampshire's survey center.

"Most polls stopped interviewing halfway through" the abbreviated New Hampshire campaign, "and may have missed the end game," said Trevor Tompson, the AP's director of surveys.

Stanford University political scientist Jon A. Krosnick said Clinton may have gained an advantage because names on ballots across New Hampshire were listed alphabetically, with hers near the top. He said his study of earlier New Hampshire elections showed such placement could mean a 3 percentage point advantage over those listed toward the bottom, like Obama.

That effect seemed less noticeable Tuesday on the Republican side, where the race was less volatile. And New Hampshire's deputy secretary of state, David Scanlan, said in an interview that "you'd really have to be asleep at the wheel" to let the order determine one's vote in the presidential contest.

ELECTION BRIEFS

Richardson to end 2008 presidential bid

Richardson

MERRIMACK, N.H. (AP)—New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson ended his campaign for the presidency Wednesday after twin fourth-place finishes that showed his impressive credentials could not compete with his rivals' star power. Richardson planned to announce the decision Thursday, according to two people close to the governor with knowledge of the decision. Richardson had one of the most wide-ranging resumes of any candidate ever to run for the presidency, bringing experience from his time in Congress, President Clinton's Cabinet, in the New Mexico Statehouse as well as his unique role as a freelance diplomat.

Obama wins endorsement of influential Nevada union

LAS VEGAS (AP)—U.S. presidential candidate Barack Obama picked up a powerful Nevada union endorsement that could boost his candidacy against Democratic rival Hillary Rodham Clinton in the state's nominating contest later this month. Leaders of the 60,000-member Culinary Workers Union, Local 226 announced the endorsement of Obama at a news conference in Las Vegas on Wednesday, the morning after Obama narrowly lost the first-in-the-U.S. New Hampshire primary to Clinton. A union official said the endorsement was on behalf of the union and its parent, UNITE HERE, which claims 450,000 active members in the U.S. It is Obama's first endorsement from a major national union.

NY Mayor Bloomberg weighs 2008 run

Bloomberg

NEW YORK (AP)—New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg has quietly been polling and conducting a highly sophisticated voter analysis in all 50 states as he decides whether to launch an independent presidential bid, associates said Wednesday. The exhaustive data collection started months ago, and when the review begins shortly, it will provide the data-obsessed billionaire businessman with the information he will use to decide whether to make a third-party run for the White House. The scope of the research, details of which were revealed to The Associated Press, demonstrates how seriously Bloomberg is considering running for president despite his almost-daily denials that he isn't entering the race. The extensive coast-to-coast research effort shows that Bloomberg is willing to dig deep into his wallet simply to gauge his chances of winning and lining up the proper support network.

Bodies of 4 youths found in DC home

WASHINGTON (AP)—The decomposing bodies of four young people were found Wednesday by U.S. marshals delivering an eviction notice, and a woman who answered the door was taken into custody for questioning.

Investigators were trying to determine whether the woman was related to the four victims, who had been dead at least two weeks, authorities said. Her name was not released.

"She was apparently calm throughout," U.S. Marshals Service spokesman Cole Barnhart said.

Mayor Adrian Fenty said the condition of the bodies made it difficult to identify them. "It is going to take scientific tests run by the chief medical examiner's office," he said.

Police Chief Cathy Lanier said the bodies appeared to be of females ranging in age from 5 to 18. Authorities were investigating how and when they died.

The case may not be ruled a homicide until the medical examiner determines the cause of death, police said. Lanier said there were no signs of forced entry into the home.

The bodies were found upstairs in the southeast Washington apartment, part of a block of virtually identical apartment houses near Bolling Air Force Base in one of this city's poorest areas, authorities said.

Larry Jones, who lives next door, said that a woman and two or three children live at the home but that he had not seen them since the summer. The children appeared healthy at the time, he said.

Jones added that in recent months he had noticed a "strange odor" coming through his vent.

Study: Rare gene change linked to autism

By LINDA A. JOHNSON
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

A rare genetic variation dramatically raises the risk of developing autism, a large study showed, opening new research targets for better understanding the disorder and for treating it.

Research into the causes of autism has focused on genetic causes because so many families have multiple children with the disorder. Thus far, only about 10 percent of autism cases have a known genetic cause. Boston-area researchers estimate the gene glitch they've identified accounts for another 1 percent of cases.

They found a segment of a chromosome which has genes linked to brain development and various developmental disorders was either missing or duplicated far more often in autistic people. The defect was inherited in some cases, but more often the result of a random genetic accident.

The results from the Autism Consortium study, released online Wednesday by the New England Journal of Medicine, confirm those of smaller studies by U.S. and Canadian research groups in the past year. The consortium verified its findings by checking two other DNA databases.

"They really did nail it," said Dr. Andrew Zimmerman, director of the Kennedy Krieger Institute's Center for Autism & Related Disorders in Baltimore, who was not involved in the research.

He predicted children newly diagnosed with autism or other developmental disorders now will be tested for this defect on chromosome 16 and that studies of many more DNA samples may reveal other autism-related gene variations.

Already, the findings are starting to be used to give some parents long-sought answers to burning questions: What caused autism in their child and how likely is it that any future children also would have autism, long known to run in families?

"We've provided very compelling evidence that this particular small stretch of the genome provides an important clue to the biological roots of autism," said lead researcher Mark J. Daly, an assistant genetics professor at Harvard Medical School and an investigator for the consortium, which includes researchers from 14 Boston-area universities and medical centers.

When the biological pathways involved are figured out, scientists can try to design drugs to target chemicals in the brain to treat autism, said Geraldine Dawson, chief science officer of the advocacy group Autism Speaks.

US to send 3,000 Marines to Afghanistan

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Pentagon is preparing to send at least 3,000 Marines to Afghanistan in April to bolster efforts to hold off another expected Taliban offensive in the spring, military officials said Wednesday.

The move represents a shift in Pentagon thinking that has been slowly developing after months of repeated insistence that the U.S. was not inclined to fill the need for as many as 7,500 more troops that commanders have asked for there. Instead, Defense Secretary Robert Gates pressed NATO allies to contribute the extra forces.

Pentagon Press Secretary Geoff Morrell said Wednesday that a proposal will go before Gates on Friday that would send a ground and air Marine contingent as well as a Marine battalion—together totaling more than 3,000 forces—to southern Afghanistan for a "one-time, seven-month deployment."

Gates, he said, will want to review the request, and is not likely to make a final decision on Friday.

"He will take it and consider it thoroughly before approving it," said Morrell. "I just want to get people away from the idea that this is going to be imminently approved by the secretary."

He said Gates "has some more thinking to do on this matter because it's a serious allocation of forces."

Morrell added that Gates' thinking on the issue has "progressed a bit" over time as it became clear that it was politically untenable for many of the NATO nations to contribute more combat troops to the fight.

"The commanders need more forces there. Our allies are not in the position to provide them. So we are now looking at perhaps carrying a bit of that additional load," the spokesman said.

Morrell said the move, first reported Wednesday by ABC News, was aimed at beating back "another Taliban offensive" that is expected this spring—as has occurred in previous years.

When Gates was in Afghanistan last month, commanders made it clear they needed the additional forces.

Last year was the most violent since the U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan in 2001. The number of attacks has surged, including roadside bombings and suicide assaults.

Currently there are about 27,000 U.S. troops in Afghanistan, including 14,000 with the NATO-led coalition. The other 13,000 U.S. troops are training the Afghan forces and hunting al-Qaida terrorists.

Morrell said that while the Marine ground and air contingent would be put in place to prevent a spring Taliban offensive, the Marine battalion likely would be used to train Afghan forces.

AP

A British soldier, right, with the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), gives a copy of a newspaper issued by the ISAF in Lashkar Gah, provincial capital of Helmand province, south of Kabul, Afghanistan on Monday, Jan. 7, 2008.

Bush strongly warns Iran on naval clash

JERUSALEM (AP)—President Bush warned Iran of "serious consequences" if it meddles again with U.S. warships in the Persian Gulf, opening a Mideast peacemaking mission Wednesday on an ominous note. He told Israel to dismantle unauthorized settlement outposts and demanded that the Palestinians halt rocket attacks from areas controlled by Hamas Islamic militants.

Bush

Bush, on his first visit as president to Israel, acknowledged widespread doubts about whether he can break through decades of distrust to achieve his goal of a major peace agreement by the end of his presidency in January, 2009.

"I'm under no illusions," Bush said at a news conference with Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert. "It's going to be hard work."

Unpopular at home, Bush got an extremely warm welcome in staunch ally Israel. With his presidency slipping away and skepticism about the seriousness of his commitment to Mideast peacemaking, Bush hopes an accord would improve a legacy tarnished by an unpopular Iraq war, economic anxieties and other problems.

Already a troubling issue for Bush, Iran jumped back into the spotlight Sunday when Iranian boats harassed and provoked three American Navy ships in the strategic Strait of Hormuz. U.S. officials said Iran threatened to explode the vessels, but the incident ended peacefully.

Bush said "all options are on the table" to protect U.S. ships. He said the Iranian boats "were very provocative and it was a dangerous gesture on their part. ... And they know our position, and that is: There will be serious consequences if they attack our ships, pure and simple. And my advice to them is don't do it."

Bush already was on the defensive about Iran because a new U.S. intelligence report contradicted White House assertions that Tehran was building a nuclear weapon. The National Intelligence Estimate found Iran halted its program in 2003 under international pressure.

Ex-official wants immunity in tape case

WASHINGTON (AP)—Attorneys for Jose Rodriguez told Congress the former CIA official won't testify about the destruction of CIA videotapes without a promise of immunity, two people close to the tapes inquiry said Wednesday.

Rodriguez, the former head of the CIA's National Clandestine Service, ordered that the tapes, which show harsh CIA interrogation of two al-Qaida suspects, be destroyed in 2005. Rodriguez is scheduled to testify before the House Intelligence Committee on Jan. 16.

Defense attorney Robert Bennett told lawmakers, however, that he would not let Rodriguez testify because of the criminal investigation into the case. Without a promise of immunity, anything Rodriguez said at the hearing could be used against him in court.

The discussions were described to The Associated Press by two people close to the case who spoke on condition of anonymity because the talks were to be private.

The CIA has acknowledged that it destroyed the videos, and the Bush administration has urged Congress and the courts to stay out of the tapes inquiry while the Justice Department investigates.

U.S. District Judge Henry H. Kennedy agreed Wednesday not to hold hearings. He said the Justice Department had promised a thorough investigation, and he saw "no reason to disregard the Department of Justice's assurances."

Congress, however, has refused to back off and had planned to make Rodriguez one of the first witnesses in its investigation. It was unclear whether Bennett issued a formal request for immunity or merely told the committee that Rodriguez wouldn't testify without it.

E-mails put pressure on Texas prosecutor

HOUSTON (AP)—The man considered Texas' most powerful district attorney faced intense pressure to resign Wednesday following the release of sexually and racially charged messages he sent and received using his county e-mail account.

Harris County District Attorney Chuck Rosenthal, a Christian conservative, was running for re-election unopposed in the Republican primary until the release over the holidays of affectionate e-mails between him and his secretary.

"The very next time I see you, I want to kiss you behind your right ear," he e-mailed assistant Kerry Stevens, with whom he has acknowledged having an affair in the 1980s.

Although Rosenthal has insisted the affair has been over for years, he wrote Stevens in July: "Hopefully, sometime this week you will let me hold you."

The e-mails also show Rosenthal, 61, used his e-mail account to strategize about his campaign. It is illegal in Texas to use government property for political activity.

Rosenthal told top county officials Wednesday he would not resign despite admitted poor judgment.

"Thankfully stupidity is not a ground (for removal)," Rosenthal said Wednesday in an e-mail to Ed Emmett, the county's chief executive, who released the note to reporters.

Emmett, also a Republican, said the e-mails were disgusting and Rosenthal should step down to spare the county and his own staff the embarrassment of a lengthy investigation.

ACROSS THE NATION

Police: Dad threw 4 children off bridge

BAYOU LA BATRE, Ala. (AP)—A day after reporting his four young children were missing, a shrimp fisherman broke down and confessed that he threw them off an 80-foot-high bridge to their deaths, authorities said Wednesday. Lam Luong, 37, was charged with four counts of capital murder, and divers searched the murky waters for the bodies of the youngsters, who ranged in age from a few months to 3 years. Luong had a drug habit and had argued with his wife, Ngoc Phan, before taking the children, said Phan's brother-in-law, Kam Phengsisomboun. Authorities said they believe Luong drove Monday to the two-lane Dauphin Island bridge over the Intracoastal Waterway, stopped at the highest part of the span and threw the youngsters over the side.

Pregnant Marine missing from N.C. base

CAMP LEJEUNE, N.C. (AP)—A 20-year-old pregnant Marine who was expected to testify about something she witnessed on base has been missing since mid-December, authorities said. The Marine Corps said Wednesday it is cooperating fully with the Onslow County Sheriff's Office in the disappearance of Lance Cpl. Maria Lauterbach, who is about eight months pregnant. The sheriff's office has said Lauterbach's mother reported that her daughter was supposed to testify about an on-base incident. "There are several findings and pieces of evidence that have been discovered that cause law enforcement to be concerned with the circumstances surrounding Maria's disappearance," the sheriff's department said in a statement. The State Bureau of Investigation also is working on the case.

Swollen rivers receding in hard-hit Ind.

MONTICELLO, Ind. (AP)—Troy Nice looked out over the swollen Tippecanoe River and the houses surrounded by its spilled water. He wondered how his own home had fared as the water began its slow retreat on Wednesday. "I didn't think it would come up like this," said Nice, 39. "I managed to get my guitar, dog, and I got my cell phone charger, and some little things. This is the worst it's ever been." Nice returned to this stretch of river a day after fleeing the rising water with hundreds of other residents. The Tippecanoe reached record levels along the 20-mile stretch from a storm that dumped as much as 7 inches of rain in parts of northern Indiana. The National Weather Service estimated that it could be three days before the Tippecanoe retreats within its banks.

Asia

Shoppers: It's BYO bag in China

BEIJING (AP)—Declaring war on the "white pollution" choking its cities, farms and waterways, China is banning free plastic shopping bags and calling for a return to the cloth bags of old—steps largely welcomed by merchants and shoppers on Wednesday.

The measure eliminates the flimsiest bags and forces stores to charge for others, making China the latest nation to target plastic bags in a bid to cut waste and conserve resources.

Beijing residents appeared to take the ban in stride, reflecting rising environmental consciousness and concern over skyrocketing oil prices.

"If we can reduce waste and save resources, then it's good both for us and the whole world," said college student Xu Lixian, who was buying tangerines out of cardboard boxes at a sidewalk stall.

The ban takes effect June 1, barely two months before Beijing hosts the Summer Olympic Games, ahead of which it has been demolishing rundown neighborhoods and working to clear smog. The games have added impetus to a number of policies and projects, likely boosting odds for the bag ban's implementation.

Under the new rules, businesses will be prohibited from manufacturing, selling or using bags less than 0.025 millimeters (0.00098 inches) thick, according to the order issued by the State Council, China's Cabinet. The council's orders constitute the highest level of administrative regulation and follow-through is carefully monitored.

More durable plastic bags still will be permitted for sale by markets and shops.

The regulation, dated Dec. 31 and posted on a government Web site Tuesday, called for "a return to cloth bags and shopping baskets to reduce the use of plastic bags."

BLACK NAZARENE AP

Devotees climb to touch a replica of the Black Nazarene, center, during an annual procession Wednesday Jan. 9, 2008, at Quiapo district in Manila, Philippines. At least one devotee died and scores of others were injured as tens of thousands of barefoot Catholic devotees jostled for a chance to touch the 401-year-old black image of Jesus Christ in an annual procession seen as a way to seek blessings or forgiveness of sins.

Philippines seeks charter change to permit Muslim federal region

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—The Philippine government will ask congress to amend the country's constitution to allow the creation of a Muslim federal region in the south—a key step aimed at breaking an impasse in talks with an Islamic militant group, an official said Wednesday.

The Malaysian-brokered talks between the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front hit a snag in December when rebel negotiators walked away from a Kuala Lumpur meeting to protest Manila's insistence that the talks be held under a constitutional framework.

The government was firming up a number of steps to revive the talks, said presidential adviser Jesus Dureza. A key step was to ask congress to amend the 1987 constitution for the sole purpose of creating an autonomous Muslim territory in southern Mindanao, a region that has seen decades of warfare between government forces and Islamic separatist rebels.

The MILF, which the military says has 11,000 fighters, is the largest group battling for self-rule. Military officials have often accused the MILF of giving sanctuary to members of the Abu Sayyaf extremist group and to Indonesia-based Jemaah Islamiyah.

Bhutto's party claims crackdown

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP)—Benazir Bhutto's political party said Wednesday that authorities were carrying out a massive crackdown on its supporters to stop them from taking part in next month's elections.

The government in Bhutto's home province of Sindh denied her party had been targeted, but said around 1,000 people had been arrested on charges stemming from rioting that broke out after her Dec. 27 assassination.

The violence left 60 people dead and caused tens of millions of dollars in damage.

"The common people suffered a lot of damage to their property and whoever is responsible for this will be dealt with in accordance with the law," said Akhtar Zamin, Sindh's interior minister. "We have nothing to do with anyone's party affiliation. We are objectively investigating to sort out the real culprits."

The claims by Bhutto's supporters are a sign of rising tensions ahead of the Feb. 18 parliamentary elections, which opposition parties claim President Pervez Musharraf is already intent on rigging. Musharraf denies the charge.

Latif Khosa, a senior senator from Bhutto's party, said police had filed charges against 400,000 of its supporters nationwide and arrested "thousands" of others.

"Administrative tyranny has been let lose on the people of Pakistan ... persecutory measures are being taken against our workers," said Khosa, alleging the arrests were to prevent Bhutto supporters "from taking part in the election process."

Visiting Sen. Joseph Lieberman, I-Conn., said Musharraf had assured him the parliamentary polls would take place as scheduled on Feb. 18, but acknowledged that opposition parties had little trust that the elections would be fair.

ASIAN BRIEFS

2 RP police officers killed in Jolo

JOLO, Philippines (AP)—Gunmen killed two police officers as they jogged Wednesday on an airport runway on southern Jolo island. Police said it was not clear if al-Qaida-linked Abu Sayyaf militants were involved in the dawn attack. Two unidentified men armed with pistols fatally shot the officers then ran away from the Jolo airport, police said. The two officers carried their pistols but apparently were surprised by the gunmen, who shot them 13 times in the head and body. The attackers did not get the victims' guns, police said. Regional police chief Joel Goltiao said it was difficult to say whether the attack was staged by the Abu Sayyaf or sparked by a local feud on Jolo, which is notorious for a surfeit of unlicensed guns, grenades and other weapons.

Pig's 'green' genes passed to offspring

BEIJING (AP)—A cloned pig whose genes were altered to make it glow fluorescent green has passed on the trait to its young, a development that could lead to the future breeding of pigs for human transplant organs, a Chinese university reported. The glowing piglets' birth proves transgenic pigs are fertile and able to pass on their engineered traits to their offspring, according to Liu Zhonghua, a professor overseeing the breeding program at Northeast Agricultural University. "Continued development of this technology can be applied to ... the production of special pigs for the production of human organs for transplant," Liu said in a news release posted Tuesday on the university's Web site.

Sri Lanka soldiers seize rebel territory

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP)—Sri Lankan soldiers pushed across the front lines and captured rebel-held territory as heavy artillery and mortar battles across the north left 47 people dead, the military said Wednesday. Fighting has escalated around the Tamil Tigers rebels' de facto state in the north since the government last week officially pulled out of a long-ignored cease-fire. Police commandos, meanwhile, shot and killed the top rebel leader in eastern Sri Lanka, said military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara. He said the rebel leader, identified as Shankar, had been hiding among civilians in the east, a region the government said it had liberated from Tamil Tiger control in July.

Detentions follow Chinese protest

BEIJING (AP)—Chinese officials detained four people over the beating death of a man who had filmed a clash between villagers and authorities, state media said Wednesday. The killing touched off protests that underscored public anger over abusive treatment by government employees. The swift action by officials reflected concerns that such incidents could spill over into larger protests against authorities, whose heavy-handed manner of dealing with civil disputes frequently arouses resentment. Residents angrily marched Tuesday in front of Tianmen city hall in central China, demanding redress for the death of Wei Wenhua, a 41-year-old construction company executive.

Japan to upgrade care of elderly inmates

TOKYO (AP)—The swelling numbers of elderly inmates in Japan's prisons has prompted the government to begin a major revamp of its jails to provide elevators, handrails and wheelchair ramps for incarcerated seniors. Renovation plans are set to begin by the end of March in three of the country's 75 prisons to accommodate seniors who require assistance, the Justice Ministry said this week. The government will spend $76 million to create senior-friendly facilities for about 1,000 inmates, the first step in a program likely to be expanded in the future, ministry officials said. The number of inmates 60 or older was 8,700 at the end of 2006, close to a threefold increase from a decade earlier.

World

9 US soldiers die in new Iraq offensive

BAGHDAD (AP)—Nine American soldiers were killed in the first two days of a new offensive to root out al-Qaida in Iraq fighters holed up in districts north of the capital, the U.S. military reported Wednesday.

The losses came as many militants fled U.S. and Iraqi forces massing in Diyala, a province of palm and citrus groves that has defied the trend toward lower violence. The campaign's scope is nationwide but is mainly focused on gaining control of Diyala and its most important city, Baqouba, which al-Qaida has declared the capital of its self-styled Islamic caliphate.

Six soldiers were killed and four were wounded Wednesday in a booby-trapped house in Diyala, the U.S. command said. It also announced that three U.S. soldiers were killed and two wounded in an attack Tuesday in Salahuddin province, north of Diyala.

The toll marked some of the deadliest days for U.S. forces in Iraq since last fall. For all December, 23 U.S. soldiers died in Iraq.

The blows against U.S. troops came as extremists tried to stay ahead of the military advance. Al-Qaida fighters retreated north from Diyala, presumably to Salahuddin, before the offensive began Tuesday, the top U.S. commander in northern Iraq, Maj. Gen. Mark P. Hertling, told reporters in Baghdad.

"Operational security in Iraq is a problem," he said, noting that the Iraqi army uses unsecured cell phones and radios. "I'm sure there is active leaking of communication."

Hertling said his troops had killed 20 to 30 insurgents in the first two days of the operation.

Only Baghdad province has been deadlier than Diyala the past two years, according to an Associated Press count.

And while violence has declined over the past six months in Baghdad and many other places in Iraq, much of Diyala has remained a killing field. At least 273 civilians were slain in Diyala last month, compared to 213 in June. Over the same span, monthly civilian deaths in Baghdad dropped from 838 to 182.

AP

WORLD RECORD

Skaters try to set a world record for the longest line of ice-skaters in Mexico City, Wednesday, Jan. 9, 2007. About 225 children and teenagers wobbled across a large rink in Mexico City's main square Wednesday, in what the city government claimed set a new world record for the longest human chain of ice skaters.

Violence accompanies Bush visit to Mideast

JERUSALEM (AP)—The Israeli military fired at Palestinian militants in Gaza on Wednesday, killing three people, after a rocket hit a house in a battered Israeli border town just as President Bush began his Mideast peace mission.

Palestinians fired at least 13 rockets and mortar shells from Gaza at Israel, and at least eight exploded in Israel, police said. Two hit houses in Sderot, just half a mile from the Gaza border fence, a frequent target of the crude, homemade Gaza projectiles.

The Israeli military hit back after both rocket strikes in the town. Before Bush arrived, the military said it targeted three militants who fired rockets at Israel, and Palestinian medics said one was killed. Another six people were wounded.

One rocket hit the home of Sderot resident Danny Dahan. Speaking from the hospital where he was treated for shock, he told Army Radio he had several close calls in recent years. In the Wednesday attack, the rocket tore through the ceiling and landed on his son's bed.

"Rockets have been raining on this town for years and no one is doing anything," a sobbing Dahan told the radio. He did not suffer serious injuries.

Just after Bush arrived in Israel at midday, another rocket exploded in Sderot, hitting a house. No one was hurt, police said.

The military hit back with ground fire, aiming for the rocket squad. Palestinian hospital officials said two civilians were killed, a woman and a young man. Four people were wounded.

Palestinian militants have been firing rockets and mortars at Israel nearly every day for months. The small, primitive projectiles cause little damage and few casualties, but they have badly disrupted life in Israeli towns and villages around Gaza.

Ex-rebel leader elected Kosovo prime minister

PRISTINA, Serbia (AP)—A former rebel leader was elected Kosovo's prime minister Wednesday, vowing that the province is only weeks away from independence and calling on Serbia to give up its claim to the territory.

Kosovo's parliament elected Hashim Thaci by a vote of 85-22 to head a coalition government that will try to steer the province through a declaration of independence, a course supported by the United States and some European governments, but fiercely opposed by Serbia and Russia.

"It's an issue of weeks and Kosovo will be an independent, sovereign and democratic country," Thaci told The Associated Press in an interview in his residence in the provincial capital, Pristina. "Independence is everything for us. We have sacrificed - we deserve it."

Still, he cautioned that no move would be made without the approval of the United States and the key European nations. "Kosovo will do nothing without Washington and Brussels. No unilateral actions," Thaci said, referring to the seat of the European Union in Belgium.

Kosovo, though legally part of Serbia, has been under U.N. and NATO control since NATO's 78-day bombing campaign in 1999 ended a Serb crackdown on separatist ethnic Albanians.

Darfur peacekeeping set back by 6 months

UNITED NATIONS (AP)—U.N. peacekeeping forces lack the troops and equipment necessary to improve the situation in violence-wracked Darfur and will continue to be ineffective until mid-2008, the U.N. peacekeeping chief cautioned Wednesday.

United Nations officials are discussing with Ukraine and Russia ways of obtaining helicopters and other equipment while also considering pulling them away from other U.N. peacekeeping missions, said Jean-Marie Guehenno, the U.N. undersecretary-general for peacekeeping.

Guehenno's warnings of "dire consequences" for Sudan, during a half-hour report to U.N. Security Council members, raised questions about whether the African Union-United Nations peacekeeeping mission that took over just this month can provide even for its own security.

In his assessment, Guehenno offered a grim outline of the council's options and the many political and bureaucratic obstacles they face. The beleaguered A.U.-U.N. mission, as the latest international effort to quell the widespread violence in western Sudan, has 9,000 soldiers and police officers, but it is supposed to have 26,000.

WORLD BRIEFS

Kenya president says no recount, or vote

KISUMU, Kenya (AP)—President Mwai Kibaki, addressing countrymen who had to flee blazing homes and rampaging mobs armed with machetes and arrows in Kenya's seething political turmoil, defiantly rejected demands Wednesday for a new election or vote recount. Violence set off by opposition claims that Kibaki stole the Dec. 27 presidential election raged on, causing a new exodus of refugees, and there was little sign of softening by the president or his chief rival, Raila Odinga. More than 500 people have died in violence that in some areas pits other tribes against Kibaki's Kikuyu, the dominant people in politics and business in this East African nation.

Colombian rebels detail hostage location

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)—Colombian rebels on Wednesday provided a pickup location for two women they have held hostage for years, Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez said, and the Colombian government gave him the green light to launch a rescue mission. Chavez said the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC, sent him the coordinates to pick up Clara Rojas—an aide to former Colombian presidential candidate Ingrid Betancourt—and former congresswoman Consuelo Gonzalez. A previous Venezuelan-led mission to free the hostages failed just over a week ago. "This morning we received the coordinates there in the Colombian mountains where Clara and Consuelo are," Chavez said during a televised speech. "Hopefully, Clara and Consuelo will be free in the coming hours." Colombia's government responded promptly, saying it was agreeing to the mission.

Talks end with Western Sahara stalemate

UNITED NATIONS (AP)—The latest round of U.N.-led peace talks between Morocco and the pro-independence Polisario Front ended in stalemate Wednesday, with the two sides agreeing to try again in March to resolve a 32-year dispute for control of Western Sahara. U.N. mediator Peter van Walsum said the two sides could not reach a "mutually acceptable solution to the impasse." They were the third such round of talks since last year. The U.N. Security Council had said there should be no "preconditions" to the negotiations. None of that appeared to help much. "During the two days of discussions, the parties continued to express strong differences on the fundamental questions at stake," Van Walsum said.

French probe e-mail threatening Paris

PARIS (AP)—French prosecutors are investigating a cryptic e-mail sent to an Islamic Web site urging attacks on the capital's mayor and its tourist sites, judicial officials said Wednesday. The e-mail's sender and the site were not identified by the officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the matter publicly. They said only that the message went to an Internet site run by Salafists, or Islamic fundamentalists. Paris Mayor Bertrand Delanoe said on RTL radio that authorities informed him of the threat Saturday. "I am calm. I have the information I need and I have complete confidence in the work ... of police headquarters vis-a-vis security problems in general, terrorism in particular and finally the protection of the mayor of Paris," Delanoe said later on the TV station iTele.

Off The Wall

A corpse, a check, a bizarre NYC crime

NEW YORK (AP)—Detective Travis Rapp has seen his share of corpses, but this was new: two men wheeling a rigid, pale body down a Manhattan street in a red office chair, drawing a crowd of suspicious onlookers.

Looking out the window of the restaurant where he was having lunch, Rapp initially assumed "it was a mannequin or a dummy," he said. "I thought it was a joke, honestly."

A closer inspection showed that it wasn't. The man was dead, and two of his friends had hauled his corpse to a store to cash his $355 Social Security check, police said. They were arrested before they could get the money.

The bedraggled suspects, David J. Dalaia and James O'Hare, were scheduled to appear in court Wednesday night. Police said the men, both 65, were petty criminals with long histories of heroin addiction and arrests dating to the 1960s.

The trouble began Tuesday when Dalaia and O'Hare tried to cash Virgilio Cintron's check at a store in Hell's Kitchen on their own, police said. The man at the counter told them that Cintron had to be present to cash the check, so they went back to his apartment, which one of the suspects shared with the dead man.

Cintron was apparently undressed when he died, sometime within the previous 24 hours. Police said Dalaia and O'Hare proceeded to dress him in a faded T-shirt, pants they could only get up part way, and a pair of Velcro sneakers. They threw a coat over his waist to conceal what the pants couldn't cover, police said.

They then put him on the office chair and wheeled the corpse over to the check-cashing store.

The men left Cintron's body outside, went inside and tried to cash his check, authorities said. The store's clerk, who knew Cintron, asked the men where he was, and O'Hare told the clerk they would go and get him.

At about the same time, Rapp spotted the men and confronted them as they were trying to haul the body into the store. He said that even after he identified himself as a police officer, O'Hare told him, "I have to get my friend in here. I have to cash his check."

AP

Detectives lead David Dalaia, right, and James O'Hare, backround in glasses, both 65, from the Midtown North police precinct, Wednesday, Jan. 9, 2008, in New York.

Man cuts off, microwaves his own hand due to 'mark'

HAYDEN, Idaho (AP)—A man who believed he bore the "mark of the beast" used a circular saw to cut off one hand, then he cooked it in the microwave and called 911, authorities said.

The man, in his mid-20s, was calm when Kootenai County sheriff's deputies arrived Saturday in this northern Idaho town. He was in protective custody in the mental health unit of Kootenai Medical Center.

"It had been somewhat cooked by the time the deputy arrived," sheriff's Capt. Ben Wolfinger said. "He put a tourniquet on his arm before, so he didn't bleed to death. That kind of mental illness is just sad."

It was not immediately clear whether the man has a history of mental illness. Hospital spokeswoman Lisa Johnson would not say whether an attempt was made to reattach the hand, citing patient confidentiality.

The Book of Revelation in the New Testament contains a passage in which an angel is quoted as saying: "If anyone worships the beast and his image and receives his mark on the forehead or on the hand, he, too, will drink the wine of God's fury."

The book of Matthew also contains the passage: "And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell."

Wolfinger said he didn't know which hand was amputated.

Diligent cop spots missing 'ice'

GREEN BAY, Wis. (AP)—A diligent policeman used patience and a midwinter thaw to find an engagement ring lost in a snow bank on New Year's Eve. Now Green Bay police are hunting for the rightful owner.

Lt. John Laux was making rounds Dec. 31 when he saw a woman with a flashlight in a parking lot, police said. She told him she had an argument with her fiance outside Getaway Bar & Grill and tossed the ring in the snow.

He helped her hunt for the missing "ice" before he was dispatched to another call.

But as temperatures warmed up in recent days, he periodically returned to look for the ring, and on Tuesday night, he saw something glistening in the snow.

It was the ring.

Police want the owner to call and claim it, said Lt. David Paral, the shift commander, Wednesday night.

"It's still down in evidence, I'm sure," he said.

Paral said he didn't know what the ring looked like, and police wouldn't give out that information anyway because it would be key to returning it to the right person.

"I don't know if there's one diamond, or two diamonds or what," he said.

Getaway owner Jason Charles said he talked to the officer Tuesday night and told him he doesn't know who lost the ring, but he has a customer in mind who might be the one.

"It's somebody who usually comes in for karaoke, so she'll probably be in this weekend," he said, adding he's sure the ring eventually would be returned.

'Mean mom' sells son's car after misdeed

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP)—Jane Hambleton has dubbed herself the "meanest mom on the planet." After finding alcohol in her son's car, she decided to sell the car and share her 19-year-old's misdeed with everyone - by placing an ad in the local newspaper.

The ad reads: "OLDS 1999 Intrigue. Totally uncool parents who obviously don't love teenage son, selling his car. Only driven for three weeks before snoopy mom who needs to get a life found booze under front seat. $3,700/offer. Call meanest mom on the planet."

Hambleton has heard from people besides interested buyers since recently placing the ad in The Des Moines Register.

The 48-year-old from Fort Dodge says she has fielded more than 70 telephone calls from emergency room technicians, nurses, school counselors and even a Georgia man who wanted to congratulate her.

"The ad cost a fortune, but you know what? I'm telling people what happened here," Hambleton says. "I'm not just gonna put the car for resale when there's nothing wrong with it, except the driver made a dumb decision.

"It's overwhelming the number of calls I've gotten from people saying 'Thank you, it's nice to see a responsible parent.' So far there are no calls from anyone saying, 'You're really strict. You're real overboard, lady.'"

The only critic is her son, who Hambleton says is "very, very unhappy" with the ad and claims the alcohol was left by a passenger.

Hambleton believes her son but has decided mercy isn't the best policy in this case. She says she set two rules when she bought the car at Thanksgiving: No booze, and always keep it locked.

OFFBEAT BRIEFS

Crew find 8 baby mice aboard airplane

CHICAGO (AP)—A cleaning crew in Beijing discovered eight baby mice aboard a United Airlines plane that landed in the Chinese capital, airline officials said Wednesday. The crew found the mice in a pillowcase that was located in a bin for unused pillows, said Robin Urbanski, a spokeswoman for Chicago-based United. No passengers were on board at the time, she said. The mice were found after United Flight 897 from Washington, D.C., arrived in Beijing on Sunday. "Our customers on this flight were always safe and unaware of the situation," Urbanski said. The airline told local authorities about the mice, which is standard procedure, Urbanski said. The Chinese officials took the mice and "thoroughly inspected (the plane) for a little over two days," she said. The plane was back in service and flew to San Francisco from Beijing on Wednesday, Urbanski said.

Alleged burglar has fun at pool hall

WILMINGTON, N.C. (AP)—Wilmington police said a man broke into a pool hall and spent a few hours shooting pool and drinking alcohol before the owner of the business arrived. Jeremy Matthew Turner, 20, was charged with two counts of breaking and entering and larceny for the alcohol authorities say he drank. Orton Pool Room owner Eric Rylander said he arrived at the business about 10 a.m. on Tuesday morning to find TV sets on, whiskey on the bar and Turner headed quickly for the door. Rylander said Turner was cooperative so he was able to hold him until police arrived. Wilmington Police Department spokeswoman Lucy Crockett said Turner claimed he had come to the pool hall to look for keys he left there the night before.

Police seek Christmas tree prankster

NICEVILLE, Fla. (AP)—Authorities are looking for a prankster who has been placing Christmas trees in a man's driveway. According to a Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office report, the man claims the pranks have been going on at his house for about a week. After a deputy responded to the address on Sunday, the officer found seven Christmas trees and a broken limb in the man's driveway. According to the report, authorities don't have any suspects.

E-I-E-I Oh? Oh? Oh?

RIVERSIDE, Calif. (AP)—How many cock-a-doodle-doos will do? Voters in the city of Riverside decide next month how many roosters will be allowed in two rural areas. Measure A on the Feb. 5 would limit to seven the number of crowing roosters people can keep in the "residential agricultural" and "residential conservation" zones. Additionally, roosters would have to be confined to a sound-reducing enclosure no less than 100 feet from neighboring houses from sunset to sunrise. The measure would pass if it gets a majority vote. Measure A supporters of the measure say Riverside has become much more urbanized and crowing roosters detract from the quality of life. It would also suppress illegal cockfighting activities.

Stray dog that jumped into tiger exhibit recovers

MEMPHIS, Tennessee (AP)—If there is one place to avoid while on the lam in a zoo, it is the tiger pit. One stray dog learned that lesson the hard way and was recovering Wednesday from puncture wounds to its neck and shoulders. "This is one lucky animal," Memphis Zoo spokesman Brian Carter said of the dog. The 50-pound female retriever mix darted inside a service entrance to the zoo on Tuesday and led workers on a brief chase before it bolted over a 4-foot (1.2-meter)-high visitors railing and a retaining wall at the tiger exhibit. She swam across a 12-foot (3.7-meter)-wide moat to the interior of the exhibit and was quickly attacked by a 225-pound female Sumatran tiger. The open exhibit's main walls are 18 feet (5.49 meters) high.

Science & Technology

7 steps to get your new computer running right

By ROB PEGORARO
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The consumer electronics business can craft products that can be taken out of the box, turned on and properly used without a glance at a manual, but the home computer still isn't among them.

It's not that you can't get a computer out of the box and online quickly—but without the right configuration, it will be less secure and less useful than it needs to be.

Setting up doesn't have to take vast amounts of time. But often the problem is that much of it isn't intuitive—and the how-to details that ought to be in a manual get left out.

So I'll try to fill in those blanks.

STEP 1

Your first order of business has to be securing the machine from online attack. The Internet abounds with crooks looking to hijack your computer with some virus, worm or Trojan horse program.

Protecting a Windows machine involves activating any security software bundled with the PC so it can download updates to spot new viruses. You may need to register an e-mail address with the security vendor. No matter how annoying this is, get it done first.

You can always switch to a better security program after the first month or two at no cost because most new PCs come with three months of free security updates.

Apple's Mac OS X has seen only a handful of malware attacks, none successful, so you don't need to buy a security-software suite. (Really. Download the free ClamXav program—clamxav.com—if you want, but so far it has only helped stop Mac users from forwarding Windows viruses by mistake.)

But Macs do arrive with an important line of defense left open: firewall software to block online worms. To activate it, click the "System Preferences" icon in the dock at the bottom of the screen, click its "Security" icon, click the "Firewall" heading and then click the button next to "Set access for specific services and applications."

STEP 2

The next step is to download any available security updates. In Windows Vista, click on the "Start" menu, click "Control Panel" and then click the "Check for updates" link. On a Mac, go to the Apple-icon menu in the top left corner and select "Software Update." Leave the computer alone until it installs these patches.

STEP 3

But wait, there's more! On a Mac or a PC, the Adobe Flash software that displays those nifty animated elements on many Web sites most likely needs updates. Go to Adobe's site for the latest version: adobe.com/flashplayer. Windows users will also need to hit java.com and apple.com/quicktime for updates to the Java and QuickTime software many Web sites employ.

STEP 4

After you've added all these updates, you can get rid of some unnecessary programs. Most Windows machines arrive loaded with junk programs that mostly waste space.

Open "Control Panel" again, then click the "Uninstall a program" link to boot these unwanted items. The 60-day trial copy of Microsoft Office on most new PCs should be among them—it's cheaper to add Office by buying the "Home and Student Edition." Also consider evicting copies of AOL and, if you're a Dell or Toshiba user, the third-rate Yahoo Music Jukebox.

Macs ship with far less junk, but their trial copies of Microsoft Office and Apple's iWork '08 can also be tossed once they expire or you've bought one or the other. To dump Office, open the Office 2004 folder inside the Applications folder and double-click "Remove Office." To do the same with iWork, drag its folder from the Applications folder to the Trash.

STEP 5

You can then make some selective upgrades. The free Mozilla Firefox browser (mozilla.com) works better than Internet Explorer in Windows; on a Mac, it's a useful backup to Apple's Safari. Apple's iTunes (apple.com/itunes), in turn, beats Microsoft's Windows Media Player. And either Mozilla Thunderbird or Microsoft's Windows Live Mail (live.com/wlmail/overview) provides better e-mail tools than Vista's Windows Mail.

STEP 6

As you're moving over your old files and settings with Vista's Windows Easy Transfer or a Mac's Migration Assistant, you shouldn't rush to reinstall old programs. Some may not work with the new machine's operating system; others may seem redundant next to software already on the machine. But first, see if you actually miss these applications.

Never reinstall one type of software from the original CDs—the "drivers" that let the computer talk to add-ons like printers. Download the latest versions from the vendor's Web site instead.

STEP 7

If you're not sick of computer setup, picking up some inexpensive hardware can spare you vast amounts of trouble down the road. For a laptop or a desktop, a hard drive or flash drive that plugs into the computer will greatly ease backing up your files. And if you own a desktop machine, plugging into an uninterruptible power supply will stop you from losing work whenever the lights flicker.

If all this seems like too much work for the reward, remember some kinds of electronics can be even worse. Try wiring a home-theater system from separate components or coaxing a "universal" remote control into operating all the boxes under the TV.

Five things your new computer should have

By ROB PEGORARO
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5 things that should be on a new home computer but often are not:

- Simple but flexible automatic file-backup software. (Macs have this—provided you own an external hard drive.)
- The Mozilla Firefox browser, which is simpler and more capable than Internet Explorer on Windows and a useful backup to the Safari browser on a Mac.
- Easy, reliable personal-finance software.
- Podcast-friendly music software. Apple's iTunes can easily subscribe to podcasts, but Windows PCs cannot.
- A prominent link to a site that features trusted, tested add-on software downloads (most Linux distributions include this).

5 things that are often on a new home computer but shouldn't be:

- Trial versions of Microsoft Office.
- Desktop icons and Start menu links advertising free AOL service.
- Software for any subscription service that has been rejected by the market, such as Napster and Vongo.
- Third-party software to run a WiFi receiver. At best, it duplicates what's built into Windows; at worst, it greatly compounds the complexity of wireless networking.
- Stickers of any sort. It's a computer, not a NASCAR vehicle!

HELP FILE

Q. I just got a new computer, and now I need to dispose of the old one. What do I do?

A. Whether you donate or dispose of the machine, you first have to scrub it of your data, then restore its software to factory condition.

Because dragging files to the trash leaves traces behind, you need to use extra software to make them vanish. In Windows, use the free Eraser (heidi.ie/eraser) to cleanse the C: drive's "Documents and Settings" folder. Don't worry if it can't zap a few system files there; your data will be gone.

By ROB PEGORARO
(c) 2008, The Washington Post

On a Mac running recent releases of OS X, drag the contents of your home folder to the Trash, then go to the Finder menu and select "Secure Empty Trash." With older software, you'll have to erase the whole hard drive; visit support.apple.com and search for "107437" in the "Ask a Question" field to see how to "zero all data" on a disk.

Then you can reload the computer's original software. On a PC, check the manual for how to perform a system recovery, usually done by starting the computer off a special part of the hard drive. On a Mac, boot from the system CD and follow the installer's prompts.

If you can't sell the computer, donate it. Local groups such as the Capital PC User Group (cpcug.org/reboot) and Washington Apple Pi (wap.org/about/donations.html) will refurbish old PCs and place them with needy recipients. Readers have also suggested the National Cristina Foundation (cristina.org).

Machines unfit for further use should not be dumped in the trash, because of the toxic metals they contain. But computer vendors such as Dell (dell.com/recycle), Hewlett-Packard (hp.com/recycle) and Apple (apple.com/environment) can take back old hardware for safe disposal. You can also drop it off at a local hazardous-waste facility (see eiae.org for a directory), but may have to pay a small processing fee.

Wave to the PC! It's paying attention

AP

Attendee Gene Dolgoff plays with the 3DV Systems' ZCam boxing game at the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas, Wednesday, Jan. 9, 2008. The ZCam recognizes human gestures in the interactive game.

By PETER SVENSSON
AP TECHNOLOGY WRITER

LAS VEGAS (AP)—Nintendo Corp.'s Wii game console is a breakout hit in large part because users control the play by waving around a motion-sensing wireless controller.

Many new gadgets are taking the idea of such an intuitive interface several steps further. Soon, you may be able to control computers, television sets, even cell phones with hand gestures alone.

In one demonstration by 3DV Systems at the International Consumer Electronics Show here this week, users stood in front of a large screen and controlled a Windows computer with hand gestures: thumb left to go left, index finger right to go right, victory sign for Enter.

JVC, also known as Victor Company of Japan Ltd., demonstrated a prototype TV with controls based on the same idea: gestures and sounds like snaps and claps turn the set on or off, control volume or change the channel.

The prospect of never again having to search the sofa for a remote is sure to be welcome in many homes, but the traditional fight over the remote could become worse: imagine two kids engaged in a sign-language duel to control the set, with the picture and sound changing frantically to keep up.

In another demo, when a 3DV employee did boxing motions an avatar on the screen in front of him mimicked the movement of his entire upper body—quite a step up from the boxing game of the Wii, which only senses the movement of the controllers.

A particularly popular Wii game is bowling, where the user swings the remote as if it were a ball. Two phones that hit the Japanese market in May include bowling games that work the same way, but without the Wii: Swing the whole cell phone and you launch the ball down the lane shown on the screen.

The motion-sensing technology in those phones comes from GestureTek, a Sunnyvale, Calif., company. While the Wii's remote uses a combination of tiny mechanical springs and a camera to sense motion, GestureTek uses only cameras—quite conveniently, since most cell phones and quite a few laptops already come with cameras.

GestureTek's technology is already found on some Verizon Wireless cell phones, which contain a game were the user can roll a ball through a maze by tilting the phone. Another application is the EyeToy for Sony Corp.'s PlayStation 2, which lets you play simple games by moving in front of the camera.

The technology isn't just for fun: it can be healthy too. Francis MacDougall, GestureTek's chief technology officer, said the company has run studies of stroke patients playing a snowboarding game by moving in front of a camera and found it improved their balance. Wiis also have been used for physical therapy.

To take these relatively simple applications further, GestureTek and 3DV are looking at adding a third dimension: depth. A regular camera produces a two-dimensional picture. Two cameras together can sense how far away an object is, just like two eyes enable humans to perceive depth.

"We think the interactivity of all this stuff improves with depth," said MacDougall. "You can use that in very novel ways compared to 2-D."

MacDougall demonstrated a prototype of the Airpoint, a foot-long bar with an upward-facing camera at either end. When MacDougall held his finger above it, it sensed the finger's angle and position, letting him control a cursor on the computer screen by pointing.

"We see it initially as a gimmicky business-presentation type device, but you could see it built into the corners of a laptop," MacDougall said. That approach would compete with touchscreen, but the Airpoint has something extra going for it: no fingerprints on the screen.

Reactrix Inc. makes commercial displays that you may have seen in movie-theater lobbies: an image projected on the floor that reacts to people walking on it. For instance, one of its Sprint ads let passers-by kick a football.

At the show, Reactrix demonstrated a depth-sensing system consisting of a display with a sensor and camera array above it. The system can sense and react to people up to 15 feet away waving at or pointing to objects on the screen. It will be on the market for commercial clients this summer.

3DV has another and quite exotic way of sensing depth, that works with a single camera. The lens is surrounded by a ring of diodes emitting pulses of invisible infrared light, up to 60 per second. The light bounces off whoever is standing in front of the camera, and the camera measures when it comes back. Light reflected by closer objects returns faster.

"When light hits your nose, it gets back quicker than the light that hits your cheek," said 3DV spokesman Rich Flier.

3DV plans to make its camera available to consumers by the end of the year, for less than $200, but it's lacking a big-name manufacturer to build it into screens or bundle it with game consoles.

"We want people to play with the camera and develop applications," Flier said. "We hope to see licensees pick it up."

Bed brings tech to bedroom in new way

You're probably used to having a big-screen TV or a cell phone charger in the bedroom, but diversified manufacturer Leggett & Platt Inc. wants to take things a step further by bringing tech gadgets right into your bed.

The company plans to sell a tricked-out place of rest it calls the Starry Night Sleep Technology Bed, mattresses included. The bed, which was on display at the International Consumer Electronics Show, incorporates features like wireless Internet connectivity, an iPod dock, a surround sound speaker system, LCD projector, dual temperature controls and DVR capability.

Leggett & Platt said the bed also comes with a vibration-detection feature that will elevate that half of the bed 7 degrees if a user is snoring and then return to the original position once the snoring stops.

The company expects the Starry Night to be available in the first half of 2009 for $20,000 to $50,000 depending on which features a buyer chooses.

"I know it sounds like a lot, but you show me somebody that sleeps in a bed with someone that snores; I will show you a person that thinks $20,000 is a very small amount to pay to solve that problem," Mark Quinn, group executive vice president for Leggett & Platt's bedding division, said Tuesday at CES. ***(AP)***

CONSUMER TECHNOLOGY TIPS

By ROB PEGORARO
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The new computer's acting up, you can't figure out why, a Web search for clues hasn't yielded anything and rebooting the machine didn't help—so it's time to call the tech-support line.

Before you do that, take a minute to write down two things. One is the machine's serial number—you'll probably be asked for it more than once—which may be hidden on a sticker on the back or underside of the machine. Another is the exact text of any error message you see, so the tech-support rep doesn't have to figure what particular scenario you might have encountered.

When you do call, use a cordless phone with a speakerphone option if possible; you may still get put on hold, but at least you can do other things around the house in the meantime.

■ ■ ■

If you've ever wondered how a nearby store's prices compare to what you might find online, you don't have to run back to your home or office to find out. Two of the Web's better price-finding search engines provide mobile versions of themselves that should work on any Internet-connected cell phone. To use the wireless edition of PriceGrabber, my overall favorite, go to atpgw.com on your phone. To look up a price using Google's Product, Search, visit google.com/products/wml on your phone. Amazon also provides a mobile edition at m.amazon.com that can serve as a handy price-checking tool—but please resist the temptation to buy something from Amazon in somebody else's store.

■ ■ ■

When you're looking for something at a Web site, you may want to type out exactly what you're hoping to find. But many sites' search tools go astray when they try to process a lengthy search query. Instead of displaying only the one page that includes the exact phrase you typed, they will offer up every page with at least one of the words you just entered. To avoid that, keep a search query as short as possible—and limit it to the most unusual word or words.

For example, if you're trying to figure out a "runtime error" message Windows has coughed up about a file named "cidaemon.exe," only search for that filename at Microsoft's tech-support site; if you're looking for info about an Afghan restaurant in Boston at a restaurant-review site, just search for "Afghan."

Will Boeing's 787 be safe from hackers?

SEATTLE (AP)—Before Boeing Co.'s new 787 jetliner gets the green light to fly passengers, the aircraft maker will have to prove that offering Internet access in the cabin won't leave the flight controls vulnerable to hackers and hijackers.

Boeing claims it has engineered safeguards to shut out unauthorized users, but some security analysts worry navigation and communications systems could be vulnerable.

"The odds of this being perfect are zero," said Bruce Schneier, chief technology officer at the security services firm BT Counterpane. "It's possible Boeing can make their connection to the Internet secure. If they do, it will be the first time in mankind anyone's done that."

But Boeing spokeswoman Lori Gunter said 787's aviation electronics "are not connected in any way to the Internet."

Boeing has designed the 787 to allow airlines to offer passengers more in-flight entertainment and Internet options than previous planes have allowed.

Those new features and other aspects of 787's computer network go beyond the scope of existing regulations, so the Federal Aviation Administration is requiring Boeing to show the new technology won't pose a safety threat.

In a "special condition" the FAA has ordered Boeing to satisfy, the agency notes that the 787 "allows new kinds of passenger connectivity to previously isolated data networks connected to systems that perform functions required for the safe operation of the airplane.

"Because of this new passenger connectivity, the proposed data network design and integration may result in security vulnerabilities from intentional or unintentional corruption of data and systems critical to the safety and maintenance of the airplane."

An FAA spokesman said the agency has been working closely with Boeing and is pleased so far.

"We are always in constant communication and are satisfied with what they have provided," FAA spokesman Allen Kenitzer said.

Boeing is set to deliver the first 787 by the end of the year.

Boeing's Gunter said there is "not any place where the passenger interface to the Internet shares hardware" with the plane's aviation electronics.

"There are multiple layers of hardware and software" that ensure "data cannot pass from the passenger entrainment network to the other more secure networks on the airplane," Gunter said.

Special conditions are a normal part of the regulatory process aircraft makers undergo to get their planes certified for flight. The FAA issues them any time new designs introduce safety concerns that aren't fully addressed in existing regulations.

Boeing rival Airbus SAS argues that the only way to satisfy the new requirement would be to physically separate the passenger information and entertainment systems from all other systems on the plane. Airbus told the FAA in a written comment that such a solution "is not technically and operationally viable."

Life & Style

FOR WHOM THE DOG BARKS

In and out of Iraq with Wiley

By ELLEN KNICKMEYER
(C) 2007, THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON—The last time I was in Baghdad, I'd gone to fetch my dog. Wiley had stayed with me for most of the two years I'd been based in Iraq as a reporter, and now, 10 months after my departure, it was time for Wiley to leave, too.

But as my taxi pulled up to Baghdad International Airport, with Wiley in a plastic kennel propped sideways in the open trunk, I worried about what lay ahead. We'd arrive at the airport, and I'd be thrust, I feared, into a role I did not want but could not avoid—the American carrying her dog away from a war zone while desperate Iraqis had no way out.

We all try to pretend day-to-day that our differences of nationality, race and class don't matter to us, but airports in war zones have a way of making clear that they do. When it's time to go, what passport you have in your hand and how much money you have in your wallet are matters of life and death, a haves-vs.-have-nots wedge that most people stateside don't ever experience.

Okay, you 26 million Iraqis living in daily mortal fear for yourselves and your children—y'all hang tight! American chick with her Australian shepherd? You're good to go, little lady!

Setting Wiley's cage on the airport sidewalk, I felt a familiar tension. I was determined to take care of my dog, my responsibility. But I pictured myself succumbing to the disorder of the crowded and corrupt Baghdad airport, trampling desperate Iraqis to push Wiley's kennel onto the plane, and exposing my pretense of the past two years of being more or less the Mother Teresa of all Iraq.

A woman I encountered in West Africa, in Liberia in 2003, laid bare the hypocrisy of it all. Standing at the doorway to the Monrovia airport terminal, watching the maybem of evacuation, she loudly made known her misery at being trapped while the fortunate scurried to safety.

Liberia's venal and vicious president, Charles Taylor, had just fled the country. The next day, as rebels kept up their advance on the capital, fleeing members of Taylor's family and regime converged on the airport. So did foreign journalists, leaving a story that had peaked.

Huddled against the terminal building for shelter from a pelting rain, Liberian villagers had flocked to the airport, too, hoping for protection against the rebels.

Just ahead of me in line was a noisy, frantic entourage. A kinswoman of Taylor's was fleeing, with her family and her flunkies. At the tail end of their group was a man lugging a plastic dog carrier. Inside was a poodle, its fur clipped and pompommed and dyed bright blue. The dog's indigo toenails skittered inside the cage.

At the sight of the blue poodle, the woman at the airport door wailed more loudly, outraged at the dog's advantage.

"Lord, the white people are leaving, and they're taking even their dogs! Even the dogs can get out!" she cried. "Lord, what about us? What about us people?"

Later, when our plane landed in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, the dog cage came out on the luggage belt, listing at a sharp angle, on the verge of tumbling to the floor. It's not the dog's fault it's blue, I told myself, as the pet circled slowly on the conveyor belt, its blue toenails clawing for purchase.

You could straighten the cage, I told myself. But I stayed put with the other passengers, coldly eyeing the circuiting blue poodle.

Taking Wiley with me to Baghdad had been the best of a gamut of bad pet-care options. When I'd left Dakar, Senegal, my previous posting, I'd paid my old house guards to take care of her, but when I returned on a visit I found her wasting away. And I'd had bad luck before in farming pets out to family or friends.

> "Lord, the white people are leaving, and they're taking even their dogs! Even the dogs can get out! Lord, what about us? What about us people?"

In Baghdad, at first, Wiley struggled to adjust. She had no experience of sectarian warfare. She would freeze like a rookie, hunkering where she stood in the yard, when a car bomb blew up nearby or a mortar round landed.

But Wiley settled in. She spent her time in the garden, where a plaster Greek lady stood pouring empty air from a broken fountain ever since U.S. troops rolled in and the owners of the house fled. Through the Iraq summers, Wiley would lie panting in the flower bed. When two truck bombs blew up outside our compound one day, we used the same flower bed to bury an elbow that came flying into our yard.

When something blew, Wiley learned to scramble inside the bureau, where several of us worked and lived. As soon as a boom shook our house, the dog would be indoors among us. She would twine herself around my legs as Americans and Iraqis dashed around, all of us trying to figure out what had just been hit, the more traditional among the women staffers hitting the floor in a faint. Wiley would lock her eyes on mine, beseeching mercy in the way dogs do.

I imagined her suggesting, respectfully: "Bomb shelter? Flight out? Dig a hole under the house with our paws?"

By the end of my Baghdad tour, I thought Iraq was well on its way to blue-poodle time. Car bombs. Chaos. Bodies dumped on the streets.

The day I flew out a year ago saw yet another in the daily stream of refugees that had taken 2.5 million Iraqis out of the country since American troops overthrew Saddam Hussein in April 2003. I was leaving Wiley behind at the bureau with colleagues for the time being, until I found a home in Cairo, my new posting.

At the airport, Iraqi families and their swollen suitcases lined the sidewalk outside the terminal. Mothers and fathers held the hands of little girls dressed in white and pink, ruffled to the last inch of their visible being. The children wore their best for their flight into refugee status.

Security rules dictated that travelers had to line up hundreds of feet from the terminal, waiting to be called behind the concrete blast walls where dogs would sniff their luggage for explosives.

A "Mad Max" array of mostly white, mostly Western security contractors pulled up to the airport in waves of armored SUVs, some with sirens wailing. Their gunners squatted in the open backs. Sunglasses blanked out their expressions. They were the "trunk monkeys"—security contractor parlance for the gunmen who ride in the back of convoys, aiming their weapons at the Iraqi civilians on the road. Other gunmen poked their heads out the hatches of steel-plated trucks.

The vehicles offloaded mercenaries rotating out of Iraq on their six-week break. Many of the contractors lugged dog kennels. Guard dogs and sniffer dogs that had done their time in Iraq were headed home.

There was a bark, and a scream. A German shepherd had snapped at a young Iraqi woman standing in line. The woman fell back into the arms of her

See IN AND OUT on Next Page

Wiley, in foreground, lounges with a guard dog at The Washington Post's Baghdad bureau; Post reporter Ellen Knickmeyer had to make arrangements to bring Wiley home after several years in Iraq.

THE WASHINGTON POST

Teen actress takes on the image issue

By ROBERT KAHN
(C) 2008, NEWSDAY

NEW YORK—In her latest movie, Nikki Blonsky plays an overweight high school student spurned for being different from her peers. Ultimately, she finds acceptance, glory and the hint of romance with a dimple-cheeked guy, all without surrendering pride to the body-image police.

"Queen Sized," premiering on Lifetime Saturday at 9 p.m. (ET/PT), isn't "Hairspray," but it has elements in common—at least, on the surface—with last summer's hit film. For that $200-million blockbuster, Blonsky was nominated for a Golden Globe, which will be announced Sunday night.

Unlike "Hairspray," which was set in 1962, "Queen Sized" takes place in present-day South Carolina, where Blonsky is Maggie Baker, a plus-sized high-school senior who has always pitied herself for not being skinny, pretty or wealthy. When her name turns up on the list of nominees for the homecoming court as a prank, she's mortified.

The film was inspired by the true story of a suburban Detroit teen who in 2004 spurred a national dialogue about a type of teen bullying: students voting less popular peers onto homecoming courts for the purpose of mocking them.

Nikki Blonsky, right, and John Travolta in the role of Edna Turnblad in the movie Hairspray.

"I don't easily give out these numbers, but I can tell you that I'm not a size 0 ... and I'm not a size 6 ... and I'm not even a size 10," Blonsky said last week, laughing into her cell phone from the back of a car. The Long Island teen was en route to the airport for a flight to California, where she was receiving the Rising Star Award at the 2008 Palm Springs International Film Festival.

The topic of Blonsky's dress size has come up in response to a question about whether the 19-year-old can, should or even wants to build a film career playing the girl who is noticed primarily for her weight. Blonsky won't be specific about her weight and says that dress size remains solely the purview of her stylist.

"I don't know what size dress I wear," she says.

Though this is her second screen spin focusing on size, Blonsky says, "You can only be typecast if you let yourself be." She believes that if somebody's writing parts for a plus-sized girl, then somebody has the opportunity to stand up and fill those shoes. "The reality is, if I can speak for them and be a part of their community, then I'm proud of it."

Maggie Baker differs from both Blonsky and the hyperebullient Tracy Turnblad of "Hairspray" in that she doesn't have that "unbelievable positive energy," says Nancy Bennett, the Lifetime vice president who oversaw production of "Queen Sized."

"Maggie reflects a lot more of what girls feel like when they feel they don't fit in," says Bennett. "She feels like: `Why bother? What's the point?' And that's very different from Nikki, or Tracy, who is this blind optimist."

Blonsky filmed "Queen Sized" in September and October in Shreveport, La., just after wrapping her second feature film, "Harold," scheduled for a summer opening.

In the Lifetime flick, Blonsky has a clique of outsider pals, and a mom (Annie Potts) who appears special effects-wise as both a nurturing caretaker and—in a role that offers Potts the chance to stretch her Kentucky twang—a fang-baring monitor of her daughter's eating habits.

Blu-ray pulls ahead of HD DVD

By MIKE MUSGROVE
(C) 2008, THE WASHINGTON POST

There's a lot of talk about high-definition technology rendering everything else obsolete. But it will be a while before high-definition edges out the standard DVD.

All things television are moving toward high-definition. That means there are new TV sets, new special channels and new video players promising crisper pictures.

Warner Bros. Entertainment recently announced that it will release movies only in the Blu-ray high-definition video format, instead of the competing format HD DVD. That helped simplify the world of high-definition video for consumers on one front, but there's still plenty for couch potatoes to be confused about.

The digital television transition is a separate matter. Next year, analog TV signals will cease, but a simple, inexpensive device will allow old television sets to continue to receive digital over-the-air signals.

Sales of high-definition TV sets, which show programming from high-definition video players and television channels, are still climbing. Sales of high-definition TV sets using liquid-crystal display technology were up 40 percent during the recent holiday season, according to research firm NPD.

But the standard DVD can't deliver a picture that takes full advantage of some of those sets. So, since 2006, competing technologies Blu-ray and HD DVD have battled to give consumers the best picture possible on those high-end sets.

The competition is very much like the 1980s rivalry between Betamax and VHS video tapes, which VHS won.

Warner Bros. appears to have tipped the balance toward Blu-ray with its announcement, made on the eve of the International Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas this week. Sony Pictures, Buena Vista, Twentieth Century Fox and MGM had already sided with Blu-ray, while Paramount chose HD DVD.

BEST SELLERS

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Nonfiction

1. The Dangerous Book for Boys, by Conn and Hal Iggulden (HarperCollins: $24.95) Learn how to tie knots, find true north and other essential skills.

2. Born Standing Up, by Steve Martin (Scribner: $25) The groundbreaking comedian reflects on his childhood and the evolution of his art.

3. I Am America (and so Can You!) by Stephen Colbert (Grand Central: $26.99) The Colbert Report star expounds on the forces destroying America.

4. The Daring Book for Girls, by Andrea J. Buchanan and Miriam Peskowitz (HarperCollins: $24.95) A girls' handbook of skills and must-have knowledge.

5. Boom! Voices of the Sixties, by Tom Brokaw (Random House: $28.95) Reflections on a decade of social change that swept America and its people.

6. A Family Christmas, by Caroline Kennedy (Hyperion: $26.95) Reflections and writings on the history and spirit of Christmas in the United States.

7. Clapton, by Eric Clapton (Broadway: $26) The guitarist tells all—about the blues, becoming a rock legend, his bouts with addiction and his loves.

8. The Secret, by Rhonda Byrne (Beyond Words: $23.95) Life's secrets distilled from oral tradition.

9. The Letters of Noel Coward, edited by Barry Day (Knopf: $37.50) The stiletto wit and wisdom of the British playwright and bon vivant.

10. Good Dog, Stay, by Anna Quindlen (Random House: $14.95) The bittersweet recollections of life with Beau, Quindlen's black Labrador retriever.

Fiction

1. T Is for Trespass, by Sue Grafton (Putnam: $26.95) Kinsey Millhone suspects elder abuse and becomes ensnared in a case of identity theft.

2. A Thousand Splendid Suns, by Khaled Hosseini (Riverhead: $25.95) Two Afghan women struggle to survive jihad, civil war and Taliban tyranny.

3. World Without End, by Ken Follett (Dutton: $35) Four children who witness a murder jockey for power and position as adults in 14th century England.

4. The Yiddish Policemen's Union, by Michael Chabon (HarperCollins: $26.95) Murder mystery meets alternative history in an Alaska gone Yiddish.

5. Double Cross, by James Patterson (Little, Brown: $27.99) Alex Cross is called back to action when a flurry of murders causes terror in Washington, D.C.

6. Tree of Smoke, by Denis Johnson (Farrar, Straus & Giroux: $27) The saga of an undercover CIA agent, beginning with the Tet offensive in Vietnam.

7. The Darkest Evening of the Year, by Dean Koontz (Bantam: $27) A woman who runs a golden retriever rescue group is hiding a dark secret.

8. The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao, by Junot Diaz (Riverhead: $24.95) A sci-fi-loving nerd and his immigrant family are haunted by the past.

9. Rumpole Misbehaves, by John Mortimer (Viking: $23.95) The crafty solicitor defends a boy and himself against new laws banning antisocial activity.

10. Stone Cold, by David Baldacci (Grand Central: $26.99) Adventurers try to outmaneuver a swindled casino owner and a mysterious killer.

IN AND OUT

From Page 30

friends. A contractor tugged the dog's leash and spoke sharply to it. He didn't look at the gasping Iraqi woman or speak to her.

Another contractor stepped out of his vehicle, his half-eaten breakfast in a foam container. Smiling, he crouched down and handed his leftovers to a little boy waiting in line. For most Westerners, their trips in and out of the airport would be their only chance to interact with an Iraqi family not at gunpoint.

Puzzled, the boy's middle-class mother took the box of leftovers from the boy, to be polite. She looked at the carton of milk with it. She shrugged, bemused at the ways of Westerners here, and at why he thought her family needed food.

"BLACKWATER? BLACKWATER?" an American woman bellowed at the head of the line. And Blackwater employees moved forward, showed their IDs and moved up the line.

As the Westerners jumped the line, an Iraqi businessman with teeth mottled by tobacco pulled out his Iraqi national ID card, known as his "genzia." He joked to the people around him in the line.

"Hey, I've got an ID!" he said. "Doesn't this count?"

Apparently not. All Westerners working in Iraq have some form of security clearance and IDs that give them access in U.S.-occupied Iraq. Most Iraqis don't.

Other Iraqi men pulled out their national ID cards. They wiggled the cards about. They asked each other rhetorical questions about whose country it was.

They were just kidding. After four years of occupation, with Americans banning Iraqis from base swimming pools and shunting them to separate portable toilets, Iraqis knew all too well whose country it was.

As morning wore on, I could see only two other Westerners still in the line, right ahead of me. They were graying American contractors, chatting with each other, comparing the rigors of child-support laws in various U.S. states.

The line had all but stopped moving, owing to so many Westerners cutting in. Rules ought to apply to everyone, the two contractors said. It wasn't right, they said.

My heroes, I thought. My child-support-evading heroes.

I had spent 21 months in Baghdad. I stayed in line. My plane left. I had to get a later flight.

Finally, in October, I went back to Baghdad to bring out Wiley. My cousins in Oklahoma had agreed to take her, and it seemed the best option.

Back in Baghdad after 10 months away, our bureau seemed more than ever a medium-security prison. Almost all of our Iraqi staffers had moved in. Traveling to and from work had become too dangerous. At night they slept 10 or more to a room.

Baghdad was much quieter. I was there 48 hours and heard only one boom that could have been a bomb, no gunfire, and only one or two of the military and mercenary helicopters that used to fly over our place.

It seemed the silence of a dead city. Blast walls encased entire districts, sarcophagi for dead neighborhoods.

Iraqi staffers made uncharacteristic jokes about smuggling themselves out in my suitcases—only this time, hiding in my dog kennel and flying cargo to Oklahoma with Wiley. They were normally incredibly stoicl and must have been miserable to expose themselves that way.

But hiding in suitcases was about the only way Iraqis could make it to the United States. The Bush administration had promised to take in more Iraqi refugees over the last year. But the week I was in Baghdad, it announced how many Iraqis it had managed to allow in:1,600.

Syria, which had taken in hundreds of thousands of Iraqis, announced that same week new visa restrictions for them. More than ever, Iraqis had nowhere to run.

And yet, here I was, worried about getting Wiley out. Her kennel would be too heavy for me to handle by myself. I was afraid I'd pull out my ID, barrel to the front of the line and make my earlier, sullenly principled stand just empty posturing. Never send to know for whom the blue poodle barks; it barks for thee.

But as it turned out, the airport was no trouble. A colleague helped me get a trolley for Wiley's kennel. The security line was short. Almost everyone followed the rules.

When I arrived back in Cairo, I received an e-mail from one of my cousins in Oklahoma. The subject line was "ugh." It had been a hard e-mail for him to write.

Wiley had disappeared, my cousin wrote. Weeks of searching the neighborhood and dog pounds had failed to find her.

Mountain lions, my cousin suggested. Speeding cars.

Last seen in the back seat of a limousine, I told myself, eating foie gras out of a tin and heading for the home of a new owner—certainly not me—who could keep her alive.

Believed to be hoofing it cross-country, trying to get back home, to safety, to Baghdad.

Golf Channel anchor suspended for remark

Tiger Woods tees off on the fifth hole during the second round of the Target World Challenge golf tournament at Sherwood Country Club in Thousand Oaks, Calif., in this Dec. 14, 2007 file photo.

HONOLULU (AP)—Golf Channel suspended anchor Kelly Tilghman for two weeks on Wednesday for saying last week that young players who wanted to challenge Tiger Woods should "lynch him in a back alley."

Tilghman was laughing during the exchange Friday with analyst Nick Faldo at the Mercedes-Benz Championship, and Woods' agent at IMG said he didn't think there was any ill intent.

But the comments became prevalent on news shows Wednesday, and the Rev. Al Sharpton joined the fray by demanding she be fired immediately.

Golf Channel didn't know who would replace Tilghman in the booth this week at the Sony Open or next week at the Bob Hope Chrysler Classic.

"There is simply no place on our network for offensive language like this," Golf Channel said in a statement.

Tilghman became golf's first female anchor last year when the PGA Tour signed a 15-year deal in which Golf Channel broadcasts the first three events of the year, weekday coverage of all tour events, and full coverage of the Fall Series and opposite-field events.

The suspension ends in time for the Buick Invitational on Jan. 24, when Woods will make his 2008 debut.

Faldo and Tilghman were discussing young players who could challenge the world's No. 1 player toward the end of Friday's broadcast at Kapalua when Faldo suggested that "to take Tiger on, maybe they should just gang up for a while."

"Lynch him in a back alley," Tilghman replied.

"While we believe that Kelly's choice of words was inadvertent and that she did not intend them in an offensive manner, the words were hurtful and grossly inappropriate," Golf Channel said in its statement. "Consequently, we have decided to suspend Kelly for two weeks, effective immediately."

Woods and Tilghman have known each other 12 years. She was picked to host a club demonstration with Woods in south Florida when he talked about new products from Nike Golf.

Tilghman was helped when Mark Steinberg, Woods' agent at IMG, said it was a non-issue and considered the matter "case closed."

"Tiger and Kelly are friends, and Tiger has a great deal of respect for Kelly," Steinberg said Tuesday night in a statement released by Golf Channel. "Regardless of the choice of words used, we know unequivocally that there was no ill-intent in her comments."

Tilghman had said in a previous statement she apologized directly to Woods, and the immediate support from Woods' camp was critical.

After Woods won the 1997 Masters at age 21 to become its youngest champion, Fuzzy Zoeller referred to him as "that little boy," and suggested that Woods not serve fried chicken or collard greens, "or whatever the hell they serve," at the Champions Dinner.

Woods, who had a different management team in his first full season, did not respond for three days to Zoeller's apology, and it took Zoeller years to recover from the fallout.

Tilghman's comment made the rounds Wednesday on TV shows such as CNN's Headline News, and it was prominently discussed on blogs and message boards on the Internet. It also was a topic on the practice range at the Sony Open.

"I'm sure Kelly wishes she never said that," Jim Furyk said. "I haven't spoken with Tiger, but I've been told that they've had their talk and they've discussed it. Anything I say is kind of just like pouring salt in the wound at this point. Obviously, she would love to not have said that and for it not to be news. I'm glad that her and Tiger spoke."

Fred Funk only heard about the comment Wednesday morning.

"There was no ill intent at all," he said. "I think it was just a slip, and they said that Tiger has already forgiven her. I think when you're in the TV tower for that many hours, you're going to wish you didn't say some things probably, and that was one thing that slipped out. I think you've got to give them a little grace.

"Her integrity, how Kelly is respected out here, is pretty good. I think Tiger really likes Kelly, so that helped squash it. Because Tiger could have run off with that if he took it the wrong way. But he didn't, so that was good."

Before her suspension was announced, Sharpton spoke earlier on CNN's "Prime News" and continued to push for her firing, saying he wanted to meet with Golf Channel because the comments were "an insult to all blacks."

"Lynching is not murder in general, it's not assault in general," Sharpton said. "It's a specific racial term that this women should be held accountable for. What she said is racist. Whether she's a racist ... is immaterial. She's a broadcaster. The channel has to be accountable to the public."

Judge may let Rather's lawsuit proceed

NEW YORK (AP)—A judge said Wednesday that he was leaning toward allowing Dan Rather's $70 million lawsuit over his being fired by CBS to proceed.

"I concluded there was enough in the complaint (by Rather) to continue with discovery (pretrial research)," state Judicial Hearing Officer Ira Gammerman said at a hearing on CBS' motion to dismiss the case.

The judge did not issue a final ruling on CBS' motion, but he suggested the parties try to agree on the scope of pretrial discovery—just in case—and told them to return to court Jan. 23 for a conference.

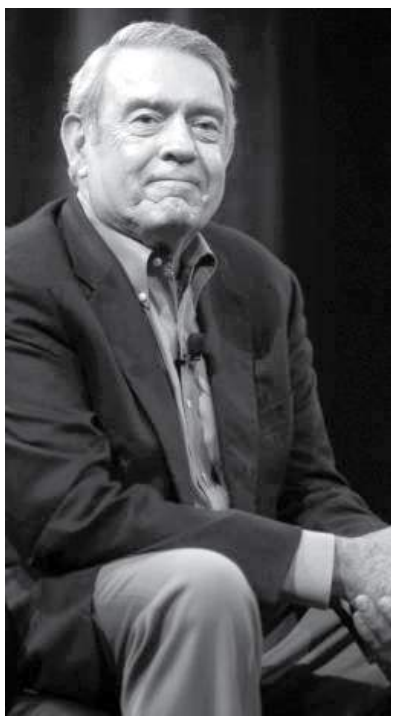
Rather, whose last months at CBS were clouded by a disputed story on President Bush's Vietnam-era military service, says his employers made him a "scapegoat" to placate the White House after questions arose about the story.

The lawsuit names CBS Corp., former CBS parent Viacom Inc., CBS President Leslie Moonves, Viacom Chairman Sumner Redstone and former CBS News President Andrew Heyward. It seeks $20 million in compensatory damages and $50 million in punitive damages.

Rather, 75, said after attending the hearing in Manhattan's state Supreme Court that he was pleased by the judge's statements.

"Allowing the case to go forward with discovery will put us on the road to finding out what really happened involving big corporations and powerful interests in Washington and their intrusions into newsrooms, which is the reason I'm here," Rather said. "That is the red, beating heart of this case."

CBS issued a statement saying:



AP

Dan Rather's last months at CBS were clouded by a disputed story on President Bush's Vietnam-era military service.

"We are very pleased that the judge is seriously considering our motion to dismiss the case, and we eagerly await his decision on that motion. In that regard, the court indicated that portions of the lawsuit may not survive our motion to dismiss."

Rather said he realized when he sued that he would be in for a tough fight.

"I knew going into this that I had to be determined to go hard and go long," the newsman said.

The defendants' lawyer James W. Quinn disparaged Rather's lawsuit as the act of a disgruntled former employee.

"When you blow all the smoke away, this is a case of Mr. Rather being disappointed that he was benched by CBS and that they did not put him on '60 Minutes,'" Quinn told the judge.

Quinn said CBS bosses had "a right to use Mr. Rather as they saw fit as long as they paid him. The (contract) language is crystal clear."

Rather's lawyer, Martin R. Gold, said that while CBS had the right to take Rather off the air after 24 years in the anchor chair, the network had to pay him until their contract expired and then "terminate him, give him his freedom."

Rather says in his lawsuit that the defendants' actions damaged his reputation and cost him significant financial loss.

Rather was removed from his "CBS Evening News" post in March 2005, six months after he narrated a report that said Bush disobeyed orders and shirked some of his duties during his National Guard service. The report also said a commander felt pressured to sugarcoat Bush's record.

'Rainbows' No. 1 for Radiohead

By TODD MARTENS
(C) 2008, LOS ANGELES TIMES

LOS ANGELES—Give music away, and true fans will still buy it.

Radiohead's "In Rainbows" album topped the U.S. sales chart this week, selling 122,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan. It arrived in stores in the CD format on New Year's Day, nearly three months after the artsy British rock group unleashed the album on the Web at whatever price fans chose to pay, including nothing at all.

It's the album's second week on the chart after some retailers sold it ahead of its street date. It bowed on last week's tally at No. 156, with sales of 9,000 copies, giving "In Rainbows" a two-week total of 131,000 in physical sales. It was the only album last week to sell more than 100,000 copies. Last week's top seller, Mary J. Blige's "Growing Pains," dropped to No. 2 on sales of 89,000 copies.

Although a six-figure debut is nothing to cry about in this era of declining CD sales, it's worth noting that "In Rainbows" gave Radiohead its lowest first-week sales tally since 1997, when "OK Computer" opened at No. 21, according to Billboard. The band's more recent effort, 2003's "Hail to the Thief," entered at No. 3 with 300,000 copies.

The band has declined to announce download figures, and in an interview with the Los Angeles Times last week, Radiohead representatives acknowledged that the Web experiment would have some effect on CD sales.

It was stressed, however, that the "In Rainbows" sales campaign is only beginning. To that end, Radiohead announced Wednesday that it will stage a 22-city North American tour this spring and summer. Dates were not announced.

Also new on the chart this week is the indie-rock-focused soundtrack to "Juno." The album, featuring music from Sonic Youth, Kimya Dawson, Belle & Sebastian and Cat Power, among others, enters at No. 8 after selling 38,000 copies.

Honorary mayor of Hollywood dies at 84

By JEFF WILSON
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Johnny Grant, the avuncular honorary mayor of Hollywood who traveled the world as Tinseltown's No. 1 cheerleader for more than a half-century, has died. He was 84.

Grant died just before 7 p.m. Wednesday, apparently of natural causes, said Officer Jason Lee. Grant was found dead on a bed in the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel, Lee said.

Grant was perhaps best known as the jolly host alongside more than 500 celebrities he inducted into the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

The lifelong bachelor lived in a 14th-floor suite at the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel.

Grant's mission in life was bringing the Tinseltown story to everyone. He hosted red carpet Oscar arrivals and Walk of Fame festivities, appeared in bit parts in movies, and produced Hollywood's annual Christmas Parade.

"I feel I have been the luckiest guy in the world," he often said. "It's been a pretty good ride."

Grant also joined globe-trotting Bob Hope as a USO ambassador, bringing entertainers to war zones to perform for U.S. military personnel during the Korean and Vietnam wars and battles in the Middle East.

He helped introduce homesick solidiers to Debbie Reynolds, Connie Stevens, Jane Russell, Terry Moore, Penny Singleton and Angie Dickinson, among others, leading Hope to once quip that he himself was "the rich man's Johnny Grant."

"You'll never find a more generous soul in your life," Dickinson told The Associated Press in 2006. "He was a ladies man. He's a Taurus. He's a doll."

Another close friend, actress Mamie Van Doren, described Grant simply as "Mr. Hollywood."

"I dated him in my teens," she recalled. "He's one of the greatest people I've ever known, so kind."

Over the years, Grant chatted with Marilyn Monroe, Elizabeth Taylor, Michael Jackson, Tom Cruise, Bing Crosby, Walt Disney, Frank Sinatra and Dolly Parton, and was a friend to several presidents, including John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson and Richard Nixon. He counted President Reagan as one of his closest friends.

Born in Goldsboro, N.C., Grant was a cub reporter for radio station WGBR when he hitchhiked to Washington to cover President Franklin D. Roosevelt's third inauguration. The diminutive reporter sat in a tree to write down what he saw for his report.

He joined the U.S. Army in 1943, then came to Hollywood after his discharge, where he landed a small role playing a reporter in "The Babe Ruth Story" (1948), which starred William Bendix.

He was lured to Hollywood, he once recalled, after seeing Mickey Rooney in the 1938 film "Boys Town."

"If that little guy can do it, so can I," he remembered telling himself.

Grant also had a part in Irving Berlin's "White Christmas" (1954) with Bing Crosby and played himself in 1966's "The Oscar."

He did Lucky Strike cigarette commercials on radio's "The Jack Benny Show" and radio celebrity interviews at the Ham & Egger restaurant on the corner of Hollywood Boulevard and Vine Street.

He also did radio interviews in the lobby of Ciro's on Sunset Boulevard, now the Comedy Store, which was the personification of glamour and glitz in the 1940s and 1950s. His guests included Eleanor Roosevelt, Betty Grable, Mel Torme and Joe DiMaggio.

"This really was Hollywood," Grant said of those days.

In 1951, he made his first overseas trip to entertain the troops.

Beginning in 1946, he was host of the game show "Stop the Clock," which aired alternately on Dumont Television in New York City, WBGR-TV in Schenectady, N.Y. and WPTZ-TV in Philadelphia.

He also worked for Gene Autry at radio station KMPC as host of the "Freeway Club" from 1951 to 1959, becoming one of the nation's first disc jockeys to mix regular traffic reports between playing records and interviewing celebrities.

The Hollywood Chamber of Commerce named Grant Hollywood's honorary mayor in 1980, a position he held for the rest of his life.

During the dozen or so Walk of Fame ceremonies the job called for him to preside over each year, he would gin up the crowd with laughter, jokes, handshakes and an occasional embarrassing moment.

His biggest flub, according to Grant, was when he introduced inductee Joan Rivers to the cheering crowd by shouting, "Here she is, Miss Joan Collins."

Rivers shook it off, telling the host she had been called much worse.

Grant also liked to recall a flub he had no control over. It happened one year during Hollywood's annual Christmas parade.

The televised event concludes each year with Santa in the final float, waving to the crowd. But on that year, Grant said, a woman just ahead of the float gave birth, bringing the proceedings to a standstill.

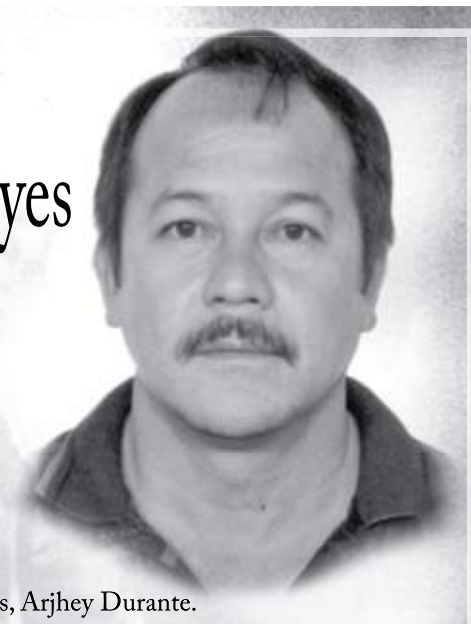
AP

Actress Halle Berry, left, gives a hug to Honorary Mayor of Hollywood Johnny Grant at a ceremony in front of the Kodak Theater in the Hollywood section of Los Angeles at which Berry was honored with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame in this April 3, 2007, file photo.

In Loving Memory

Manuel Santos Reyes

June 21, 1956 — January 07, 2008



In his new life, Manuel now joins his:
Father Esteban A. Reyes,
Mother Carmen S. Reyes,
Sister Maria Elisa Reyes Camacho,
Bother William Reyes.

He will be remembered in the hearts of his:
Wife: Adora R. Reyes
Children: Mark Steven Reyes, Darrell Reyes, Arjhey Durante.

Mather-In Law: Belen Regodon

Brothers & Sisters & In Laws:
Maria Elisa (deceased) Pedro Camacho & Children (Jeannette), Raymond/Maria Reyes & Children, David/Dolores Reyes & Children, Juan/Florentina Reyes & Children, Edward/Judy Reyes & Children, Esteban Reyes & Children/Yolanda Manibusan, Florence/George Fleming & Children, Antonio/Esabella Reyes & Children, Diana/Jose Sasamoto & Children, Virginia Reyes & Children/Brian C. Tudela, Lillian Reyes & Children, Andrew Reyes, William Reyes (deceased) & Children, Richard/Haide Reyes & Children.

..And numerous aunts, uncles, cousins, nephews, nieces, and friends.

Rosary is being said every evening at **7:30 p.m. at the San Roque Church**, San Roque, Saipan, **Burial** will be on **Tuesday**, the **15th of January 2008**, at the **Mt. Carmel Church**, Saipan His remains will be escorted from the Borja Funeral Service in San Jose, Saipan at 7:30 a.m. **Mass** will be at **11:00 a.m.** followed by burial at the Chalan Kanoa Cemetery.

Please join us in prayers,
The Family

Ratings for People's Choice Awards sink

LOS ANGELES (AP)—What happens to an awards show forced to scuttle its live ceremony because of the Hollywood writers strike? For the People's Choice Awards, it meant losing nearly half its TV audience.

The two-hour taped show that aired Tuesday on CBS was watched by 6 million viewers, compared with the 11.3 million that watched last year, according to Nielsen Media Research figures.

The weak ratings reflect the damage being exacted on the entertainment industry awards season by the two-month-old Writers Guild of America strike. The Golden Globes also canceled its ceremony Sunday on NBC, which instead plans to air a news conference to announce winners.

AP

Actress Reese Witherspoon poses for a portrait at an interview for her film "Rendition" during the Toronto International Film Festival in Toronto, in this Sept. 2007, file photo. Witherspoon was chosen favorite female Movie star for the 34th annual People's Choice Awards, during the broadcast Tuesday Jan. 8, 2008, in Los Angeles.

Representatives of the People's Choice Awards did not immediately respond to an e-mail seeking comment Wednesday.

The writers guild refused to grant waivers for its members to work on the awards shows, and the Screen Actors Guild said its members would honor picket lines and refuse to take part - depriving the ceremonies of their all-important star power.

The People's Choice Awards replaced its traditional live show and with a taped format, hosted by Queen Latifah, that had its crews deliver trophies to music, film and television stars on location.

Winners included Johnny Depp of "Pirates of the Caribbean" and Katherine Heigl of "Grey's Anatomy."

The guild also has refused to grant a waiver for the premier awards ceremony, February's Academy Awards. Its producer has vowed to stage the show as planned.

Johnny Cash tribute concert canceled

FOLSOM, Calif. (AP)—A concert marking the 40th anniversary of Johnny Cash's famous concert at Folsom State Prison has been scrapped, with the prison and the promoter blaming each other for the cancellation.

The tribute concert, scheduled for Sunday, was to have been staged in the same prison cafeteria where Cash performed before inmates on Jan. 13, 1968. That breakthrough performance became a popular live album.

Prison officials called off the show late Monday, citing problems over filming rights, media access and security concerns.

Promoter Jonathan Holiff claims the cancellation was just another broken promise by prison officials. "I was in tears when I found out," Holiff said.

The show, which would have been streamed worldwide over the Internet, was to have been underwritten by four nonprofit groups that were to share the venture's profit.

The concert also was to have featured Cash's music and include drummer W.S. "Fluke" Holland, one of his original backup musicians.

The executive director of Prison Fellowship Ministries, which had helped underwrite the event, said Cash fans and the inmates are the losers in this conflict.

"Johnny was wild at heart, just like these men," Joe Avila said. "But just like him, they can change. They can walk the line."

Cash died in 2003.

Report: Quaid's newborns put at risk

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A hospital put three children, including Dennis Quaid's newborn twins, in danger by giving them overdoses of a blood thinner, California regulators said Wednesday.

The California Department of Public Health said the Cedars-Sinai Medical Center gave the pediatric patients 1,000 times the intended dosage of heparin on Nov. 18.

State regulators said the "violations caused, or were likely to cause, serious injury or death to the patients who received the wrong medication," and they faulted the hospital for its "deficient practices" around administrating the drug.

The 20-page report does not identify the patients, but the Quaid family's representatives previously confirmed the newborns' involvement.

All three children recovered, but two needed a drug that reverses the effects of heparin.

The regulators' report found that the hospital did not adequately educate staff about safe use of heparin, which it described as a "high alert, high risk" blood thinner, and that nurses sometimes failed to adequately read labels on vials of the drug.

Cedars-Sinai's chief medical officer, Michael Langberg, said in a statement that the state's review echoed the hospital's own findings about the error and that the facility had cooperated fully with the investigation.

"While this is a rare event, we are pleased that the (health department) shares our view that it is an important opportunity for the entire institution to explore any and all ways we can further improve medication safety," Langberg said.

The hospital has apologized to the patients' families and said it made changes to prevent a recurrence, including providing more training and requiring four pharmacy workers to verify a high-alert medication before putting it in a patient care unit.

The Quaid twins were at Cedars-Sinai for treatment of an infection. They were receiving intravenous medications, and the heparin was used to flush the catheters to prevent clotting.

Quaid and his wife, Kimberly, have sued Baxter Healthcare Corp., the Illinois-based makers of heparin, accusing the firm of negligence in packaging different doses of the product in similar vials with blue backgrounds.

A similar dosage error killed three premature infants at an Indianapolis hospital in 2006. Three others survived overdoses.

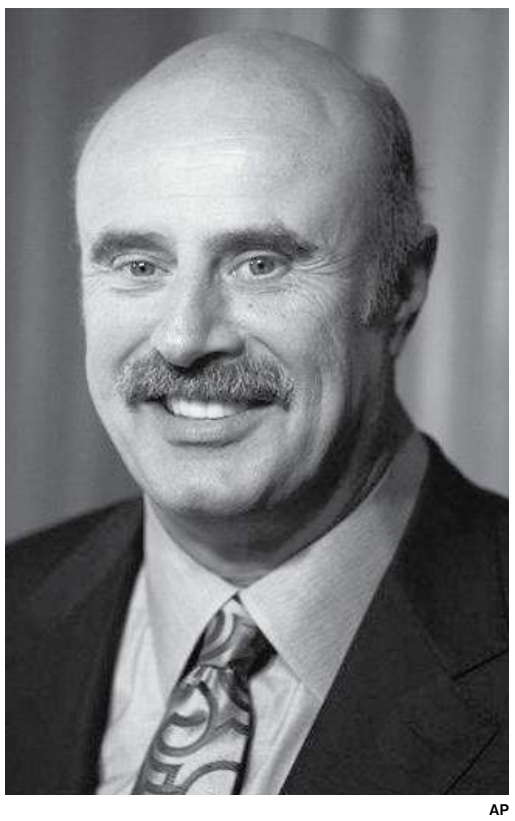
In February, Baxter Healthcare Corp. sent a letter warning health care workers to carefully read labels on the heparin packages to avoid a mix-up.

Dennis Quaid arrives with his wife, Kimberly Buffington, at the premiere of a film in Los Angeles, in this April 11, 2006, file photo.

Spears family: Dr. Phil crossed the line

NEW YORK (AP)—Britney Spears' family says "Dr. Phil" McGraw crossed the line by not keeping his mouth shut after making a house call on the singer last week.

Lou Taylor, a business manager for Spears' mother, Lynne, and younger sister, Jamie Lynn, appeared on NBC's "Today" show Wednesday and said McGraw had betrayed the family's trust by talking to the media about Spears' mental health after showing up at the 26-year-old pop star's hospital room on Saturday for a visit.



AP

Dr. Phil McGraw arrives at the Museum of Television and Radio's annual gala in Beverly Hills, Calif., in this Oct. 30, 2006, file photo.

"The family basically extended an invitation of trust for him to come in as a resource to support them, not to go out and make public statements," Taylor said. "Any statement publicly that he made, because he was brought in under this cloak of trust, (is) just inappropriate."

Taylor said McGraw was invited to the hospital by Spears' family, but "he was not invited to make this part of a public display or part of the media."

McGraw said earlier this week that he was shelving plans for a show on Spears' latest breakdown. He said Spears' predicament was "too intense" for him to go on with the show.

Taylor said the syndicated TV psychologist broached the idea of the show to Spears' handlers, who eventually decided that such a show would be "detrimental" to the family.

McGraw representative Theresa Corigliano did not immediately respond to phone and e-mail messages by The Associated Press seeking comment.

Mental health professionals also criticized McGraw this week, saying he went too far by showing up at Spears' room at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles as she was about to be discharged.

McGraw fired back at his critics in an interview with "Entertainment Tonight" on Monday.

"Somebody needs to step up and get this young woman into some quality care - and I do not apologize one whit, not one second, for trying to make that happen," he said.

Spears was hospitalized Thursday night after a child custody dispute with ex-husband Kevin Federline resulted in an hours-long standoff with police. On Friday, a court commissioner gave sole physical and legal custody of 1-year-old Jayden James and 2-year-old Sean Preston to Federline.

U2's Bono presses for French aid

PARIS (AP)—Rock star Bono pressed French leader Nicolas Sarkozy to increase aid to developing nations, the aid advocacy group DATA said.

The organization, co-founded by Bono, front man of the U2 rock group, has urged France to raise development assistance to 0.7 percent of gross national income by 2012 as agreed earlier. In 2006, French aid stood at 0.31 percent of gross national income, DATA said.

"The president admitted it would be very, very hard, but France would keep her word," the statement quoted Bono as saying Tuesday following the meeting.

DATA's statement cites an October parliamentary report showing France's estimated overseas development assistance would be 0.35 percent of gross national income in 2007 and would remain at 0.35 percent in 2008.

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First Sunday
Friday 4:30 7:05 9:55
Saturday 1:30 4:30 7:05 9:55
Sunday 1:30 4:30 7:05
Mon thru Thurs 4:30 7:05
Ice Cube, Regina Hall
Comedy, Drama • Rated PG13
Synopsis
Durell and LeeJohn are best friends and bumbling petty criminals. When Durell learns that his ex-girlfriend plans to move to another state with their son–unless they can get her $17,000 to pay off a debt–they come up with a desperate scheme to rob their neighborhood church. But when the duo fumbles their way through the break-in, they discover someone has beaten them to the punch.

The Bucket List
Friday 4:10 7:15 9:30
Saturday 1:20 4:10 7:15 9:30
Sunday 1:20 4:10 7:15
Mon thru Thurs 4:10 7:15
Jack Nicholson, Morgan Freeman
Comedy, Drama • Rated PG13
Synopsis
A long time ago, Carter Chambers' philosophy professor suggested that his students compose a "bucket list," a collection of all the things they wanted to do, see and experience in life before they kicked the bucket. But while Carter was trying to define his private dreams and plans, reality intruded.

★ ★ ★

One Missed Call
Friday 4:25 7:25 9:40
Saturday 1:25 4:25 7:25 9:40
Sunday 1:25 4:25 7:25
Mon thru Thurs 4:25 7:25
Edward Burns, Shannyn Sossamon
Horror, Remake • Rated PG13
Synopsis
Beth Raymond is traumatized when she witnesses the gruesome deaths of two friends just days apart. Even more disturbing, she knows that both of them had received chilling cell phone messages—actual recordings of their own horrifying last moments. Impossibly, the calls were received days before they died, but each death occurred precisely when and how the messages foretold.

National Treasure: Book of Secrets
Friday 4:00 7:00 9:45
Saturday 1:00 4:00 7:00 9:45
Sunday 1:00 4:00 7:00
Mon thru Thurs 4:00 7:00
Nicolas Cage, Diane Kruger
Action, Adventure • Rated PG

The Water Horse: Legend of the Deep
Friday 4:20 7:30 9:50
Saturday 1:15 4:20 7:30 9:50
Sunday 1:15 4:20 7:30
Mon thru Thurs 4:20 7:30
Emily Watson, Ben Chaplin
Family, Adventure • Rated PG

I Am Legend
Friday 4:15 7:20 10:00
Saturday 1:10 4:15 7:20 10:00
Sunday 1:10 4:15 7:20
Mon thru Thurs 4:15 7:20
Will Smith, Alice Braga
Action, Sci-Fi, Adventure • Rated PG13

Alvin & The Chipmunks
Friday 4:05 7:10 9:35
Saturday 1:05 4:05 7:10 9:35
Sunday 1:05 4:05 7:10
Mon thru Thurs 4:05 7:10
Jason Lee, Cameron Richardson
Comedy, Family • Rated PG

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New York, Tailor Made still together

NEW YORK (AP)—Tailor Made apparently still loves New York. Despite an Internet rumor about a breakup, a VH1 spokeswoman told The Associated Press on Wednesday that reality TV couple Tiffany "New York" Pollard and George "Tailor Made" Weisgerber are still together following the conclusion of "I Love New York 2" - and there are no plans for a third season of the popular VH1 reality dating show.

New York selected the 32-year-old retail planner instead of actor Ezra "Buddha" Masters during the Dec. 17 season finale, which was watched by 5.43 million viewers.

A Jan. 7 report posted on MediaTakeOut.com cited an anonymous source claiming that New York's "relationship with Tailor Made ended shortly after the reunion show was taped and that she wants another season of 'I Love New York' so that she could find the man of her dreams."

New York, who was originally a contestant on VH1's "Flavor of Love," recently guest starred as herself on FX's "Nip/Tuck" and appears in the upcoming film "First Sunday" starring Ice Cube and Tracy Morgan.

Seagal, ex-business partner settle suit

NEWYORK(AP)—Steven Seagal and his former business partner have agreed to settle a long-standing legal dispute that included allegations of contract breach and Mafia extortion, an attorney said Wednesday.

The actor and Julius R. Nasso worked together for years, forming Seagal/Nasso Productions and producing movies including "Marked for Death," "Out for Justice" and "On Deadly Ground."

But the two had a falling-out, and Nasso sued Seagal for $60 million, accusing the actor of backing out of a four-movie deal.

Nasso served a year in federal prison starting in 2004 after admitting he plotted to have the mob shake down Seagal.

Seagal testified at the racketeering trial of Peter Gotti, brother of the late reputed mob boss John Gotti, that Gambino crime family enforcers demanded that Seagal keep working with Nasso and pay him $150,000 a film.

Seagal and Nasso agreed in an out-of-court settlement that Seagal would pay Nasso an undisclosed sum of money and write a letter supporting Nasso's application for a pardon, said Robert Hantman, an attorney for Nasso.

"After six years of litigation, any misunderstandings between Mr. Seagal and Mr. Nasso have been resolved, and (Nasso) looks forward to his future and making movies," Hantman said.

Neither Seagal nor his lawyer could be reached by telephone for comment Wednesday evening.

Seagal

Bundchen denies she only accepts euros

RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil (AP)—Euros? Dollars? Pounds? Gisele Bundchen insists she's perfectly happy with them all, again denying reports that the Brazilian supermodel is shunning the weak U.S. dollar in favor of European currency.

Bundchen - known to U.S. sports fans as the girlfriend of quarterback Tom Brady - has been struggling for months to knock down recurring reports that she insists on being paid in euros, which have been rising against the dollar.

"The story of the euro is a lie," she told the Brazilian newspaper O Globo in comments published Wednesday. "I work with many international companies, I earn salaries in different currencies, that's all."

Frustration is running high in Brazil over the weak dollar and its harm to South America's largest economy. The Brazilian real has nearly doubled in value against the dollar over the past five years, making local exports more expensive to Americans.

Bundchen, one of the world's richest models, was the main attraction at the Fashion Rio Week on Tuesday. She exhibited three outfits and drew wild applause in a puffy beige mini-dress.

Top model Gisele Bundchen wears a design of Brazil's Colcci collection during the Fashion Rio Autumn Winter 2008 in Rio de Janeiro, Tuesday, Jan. 8, 2008. AP

James Brown possessions to be auctioned

AIKEN, S.C. (AP)—James Brown's possessions will be appraised and auctioned, in part to pay taxes his estate owes, court-appointed trustees said Wednesday.

Attorney Adele Pope would not say exactly what items would be auctioned or how much they were worth. She also refused to say after a hearing how much the estate owed.

Brown died in Atlanta in December 2006, throwing into turmoil the future of his trust, which might include music rights and his 60-acre Beech Island home in western South Carolina. The total value is still unclear.

His will called for the items to be divided among the singer's six adult children. But Tomi Rae Hynie, who claims to be Brown's fourth wife and the mother of another of his children, has contested the will.

Hynie argues she is entitled to half the estate. The children also are contesting the will, which was signed 10 months before Brown's death. The trustees have asked Brown's children and Hynie to provide a list of items they don't want auctioned.

An attorney for Hynie, a former backup singer for Brown, said some automobiles were given to her and shouldn't be auctioned.

"It's easier to divide money, and we don't know who will be getting what," Robert Rosen said.

Wife of Paramount boss files for divorce

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The wife of Paramount Pictures boss Brad Grey has filed for divorce after 25 years of marriage.

Jill Grey cited irreconcilable differences in her Superior Court filing Tuesday. The Greys have an 18-year-old son and a 12-year-old daughter.

Brad Grey became chairman and chief executive officer of Paramount Pictures in 2005, tasked with reviving Paramount after the studio struggled through several box-office flops under previous leadership.

His producing credits include the "The Larry Sanders Show" and "The Sopranos." He also produced films such as "The Wedding Singer," "Scary Movie" and "The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford."

Grey has been questioned as a witness by the FBI and testified before a federal grand jury in the case against Anthony Pellicano, the private eye accused of wiretapping celebrities and others to help clients in legal disputes.

Grey has denied any wrongdoing and a spokeswoman said he is not a target in the investigation.

Prosecutors have been interested in two lawsuits filed against Grey in which his attorney, Bert Fields, used the services of Pellicano.

Calls to the Greys' attorneys were not immediately returned Wednesday.

Unhappy wife laments lack of affection in her marriage

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DearAbby

DEAR ABBY: "Wilbur" and I have been together for 25 years, married for nine. During that time we have been through almost everything.

Abby, I am disappointed in the man Wilbur has turned out to be. He does nothing around the house. He does hold a job, but that's the beginning and the end of it. On top of that, Wilbur shows me no affection. He doesn't hug or kiss me, and he sleeps with a pillow between us. I realize he was never very lovey-dovey, but now there is no affection at all.

I dream about being close to a man, having a companion with whom to enjoy things in life—simple things like going for coffee together after walking through a flea market holding hands.

Our lives have been intertwined for a quarter of a century. I feel there's nowhere for me to go. How does someone in my situation find happiness?

—DISILLUSIONED IN MILFORD, CONN.

DEAR DISILLUSIONED: You and Wilbur may have been together for 25 years, but it appears you parted ways a long time ago. In order for there to be sex and affection, there has to be some sort of intimacy—and by that, I mean communication.

I suggest you begin by asking Wilbur what has happened to your relationship. If he's willing to talk, with the help of a marriage counselor you may be able to fix what has gone wrong. I can't promise you passion, but at least you won't be acting like cellmates.

If Wilbur is unwilling to cooperate, then the time has come to ask yourself if this is how you want to spend the rest of your life. Are you better off with him or without him? If you decide to stick it out because you "have nowhere to go," you may have to do a lot of sublimating. Spend as much time as you can with people (or animals) that will return the warmth you crave.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I'm a single mom with four kids. My oldest son is dating a sweet girl I'll call "Renee." The problem is she's always at my house. She's here when I return from work in the evenings and every weekend.

While I don't mind Renee's presence, I am finding it difficult to constantly feed her. I can no longer take my children out to eat without offering to include her, and she always accepts. When I grocery shop, I am now shopping for five kids instead of just my four.

How do I handle this without hurt feelings? Renee's family has very little money, and sometimes there's not much food in their house. Frankly, I feel sorry for her, but I'm struggling to feed my own kids on my salary. I know the lack of food at Renee's house isn't my problem, and I feel horrible for thinking the way I do. Please help.

—STRETCHED TO THE LIMIT IN ILLINOIS

DEAR STRETCHED: Talk to your son, specifically about your budget. It will then be up to him to set some limits with his girlfriend. Frankly, the fact that the two of them are together every night and every weekend concerns me, because too much alone time could lead to yet another mouth to feed.

Because food is a problem at Renee's house, it would be a kindness to speak to Renee's mother about seeking aid for dependent children to be sure they have adequate nutrition. The place for her to start would be the county department of social services to see if they qualify.

■ ■ ■

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

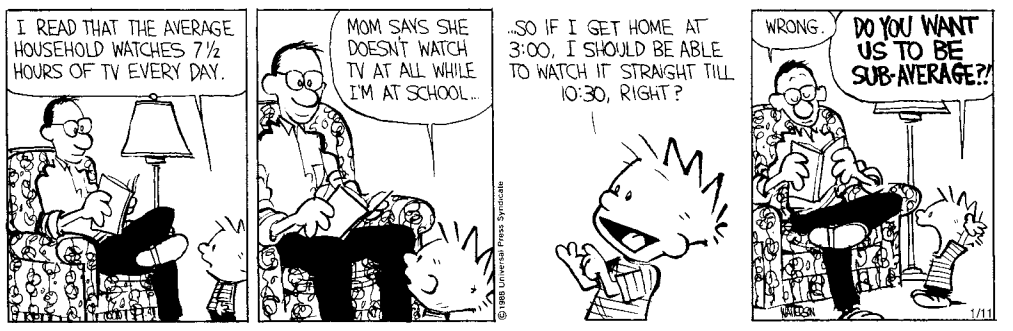
■ ■ ■

Good advice for everyone – teens to seniors – is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


I READ THAT THE AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD WATCHES 7½ HOURS OF TV EVERY DAY.
MOM SAYS SHE DOESN'T WATCH TV AT ALL WHILE I'M AT SCHOOL...
...SO IF I GET HOME AT 3:00, I SHOULD BE ABLE TO WATCH IT STRAIGHT TILL 10:30, RIGHT?
WRONG.
DO YOU WANT US TO BE SUB-AVERAGE?!
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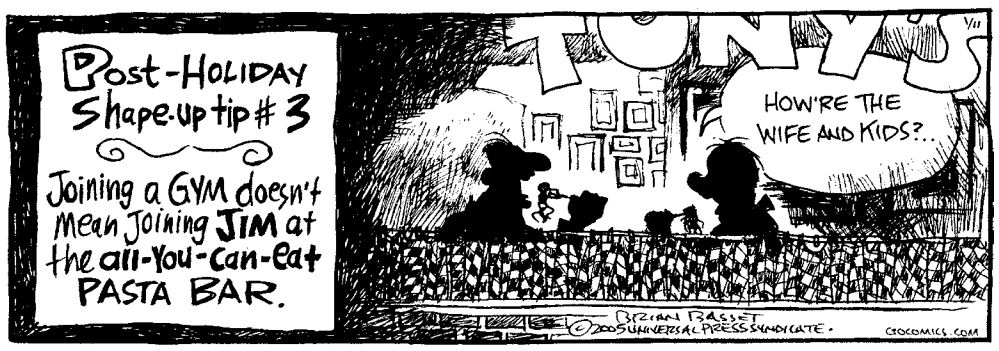
1/11

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

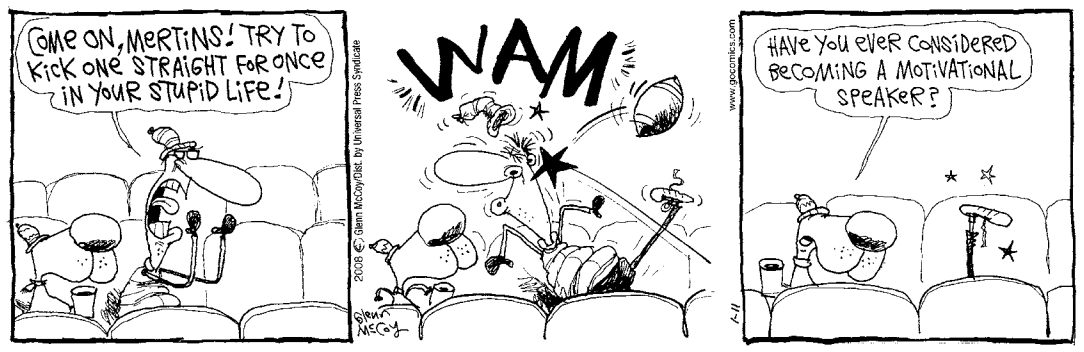
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


Post-Holiday Shape-up tip # 3
Joining a GYM doesn't mean Joining JIM at the all-You-Can-Eat PASTA BAR.
HOW'RE THE WIFE AND KIDS?..
BRIANT BASSET ©2005 UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE
GOCOMICS.COM

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy


COME ON, MERTINS! TRY TO KICK ONE STRAIGHT FOR ONCE IN YOUR STUPID LIFE!
WHAM
2008 © Glenn McCoy/Dist. by Universal Press Syndicate
HAVE YOU EVER CONSIDERED BECOMING A MOTIVATIONAL SPEAKER?
www.gocomics.com

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

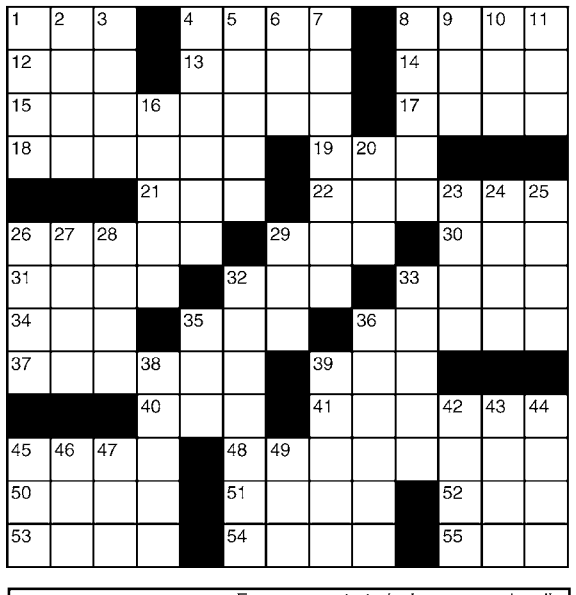
ACROSS
1 Picnic invader
4 Move spirally
8 Italy's silhouette
12 Tarzan's son
13 Bound
14 Gifford's successor
15 Seles contemporary
17 As well
18 Growths of bamboo
19 Neutral color
21 Perform
22 "Dreamgirls" Oscar winner
26 Keep tabs on
29 Gender
30 Lamb's dam
31 "Be still"
32 Tool set
33 Encounter
34 Savings-plan acronym
35 Send immediately
36 They get in the whey
37 "Alias" star
39 U.K. fliers
40 McKinley's first lady
41 Under the wire
45 Tar's bars?
48 First name of 15-, 22-, and 37-Across
50 "That hurts!"
51 Jason's ship
52 To and —
53 Help a hood
54 Fit snugly inside
55 "Absolutely"

DOWN
1 Basic learning
2 Ham's dad
3 Proofreader's find
4 Minor problem
5 Leavening agent
6 Snitch
7 Disparaging word
8 Maverick's lack
9 Tin Man's need
10 Photo —
11 Confucian principle
16 Insect
20 "La Cage — Folles"
23 Prognosticator
24 Due
25 Trawler equipment
26 Henry Clay or Daniel Webster
27 Emanation
28 Despot
29 Touchdown score
32 Maestro Herbert von —
33 Soldier's civvies
35 Nourished
36 Lacks the ability
38 Dark period
39 Fifth day Christmas gift
42 Dubious
43 Unembellished
44 Cupid's alter ego
45 Slithery squeezer
46 Difficulty
47 "Rocks"
49 Before

Solution time: 25 mins.

S	W	A	B	■	L	E	A	F	■	E	B	B
E	I	R	E	■	Y	A	L	E	■	N	E	E
E	N	C	H	A	N	T	E	D	■	C	B	S
R	E	S	I	G	N	■	■	U	N	L	E	T
■	■	■	N	O	■	R	E	P	R	O	■	■
S	P	E	D	■	R	E	D	■	A	S	I	A
K	I	N	■	■	O	L	D	■	■	E	N	D
I	N	C	H	■	B	A	Y	■	O	D	D	S
■	■	A	B	B	E	Y	■	P	K	■	■	■
H	U	M	O	R	■	■	P	L	A	S	M	A
A	S	P	■	E	N	C	R	Y	P	T	E	D
D	E	E	■	W	I	P	E	■	I	O	T	A
A	D	D	■	S	T	A	Y	■	S	P	A	M

Yesterday's answer 1-11



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Amanda Peet, 36; Mary J. Blige, 37; Kim Coles, 42; Naomi Judd, 62

Happy Birthday: You have paid your dues and it's time to put what you've learned into play. Don't be afraid to try something entirely new. It's time to put all your experience and wisdom to work for you and proceed to the finish line. Your success will be dependent on your ability to move swiftly. Your numbers are 5, 26, 28, 35, 36, 44

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Take a very secretive approach to what you do. Less talk and more action will take others by surprise and add to the impact you have. Don't let someone else's uncertainty stop you. ✪✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Be careful not to leave yourself wide open for criticism. Someone will be quick to point out flaws so, before you present an idea or concern, make sure you have thought matters through to the end. ✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): You'll be overly sensitive but don't let that stop you from saying and doing what you feel is right. You will accomplish a lot if you get things that are bothering you out in the open. Love issues are likely to arise. ✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): You can go the distance today, proving how valuable you are. Change is good and you should end up in a good position. An opportunity to learn something new will secure your professional life. ✪✪✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Don't be too quick to put your money into something you know little about. Being generous with loved ones will backfire. Love is in the stars, however, so do show affection. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Show everyone how much fun you can be. You have a lot to offer but, if the people you want to work with don't enjoy your company, you aren't likely to go far. Show your human side and an interest in other people's personal lives. ✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Don't stop short of what you want to do or you will miss out on something spectacular. Make arrangements to visit someone you miss or work on a hobby that interests you. A change of scenery will be good for you. ✪✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): You are better off doing things that will challenge you mentally, physically and emotionally. Sticking around home will only get you down or lead to problems with the people you live with. Put your energy into doing something constructive. ✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Your adventurous side is tempting you to visit unusual or unfamiliar destinations. Love and romance look promising, so position yourself to meet someone new if you are single or to make plans to do something unique with your current partner. ✪✪✪✪

CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): You should probably put in extra hours if it will help you finish something that you enjoy working on. You will be able to produce so much more if you are allowed to work freely on your own, without outside influences. Money is heading your way. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): You will be emotional today, so don't get into no-win battles. Put your worries in the closet and get out with friends, a lover or someone who will help take your mind off your troubles. It's amazing how things can fix themselves. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): There are secrets being kept from you. If you don't have all the information, don't move forward or it could cost you. A sudden change in your life will take you out of your element. Be prepared to deal with older relatives or friends. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You can separate your feelings from your actions. You are extraordinary in the way you approach life. You are progressive, proactive and a freethinker.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun,* ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations*

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	9	6						
			4		1	8		5
	5				6			4
	3	4		1			8	
	7			6		2	9	
8			6				7	
2		9	1		3			
						1	3	

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 1/11

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

2	8	6	9	3	7	5	4	1
7	1	5	8	4	6	2	9	3
4	9	3	1	5	2	8	7	6
9	4	7	2	6	8	1	3	5
3	5	2	4	9	1	7	6	8
1	6	8	3	7	5	9	2	4
6	7	9	5	8	3	4	1	2
5	2	4	6	1	9	3	8	7
8	3	1	7	2	4	6	5	9

Difficulty Level ★★★ 1/10

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

NATURAL HEALING **Solution: 10 letters**

R	H	F	A	H	L	S	Y	R	E	G	A	M	I	S
E	E	O	L	A	L	M	M	N	E	A	P	H	O	E
T	A	M	T	E	A	T	I	N	G	D	O	S	E	S
A	L	O	E	N	S	Z	N	E	S	M	W	L	C	A
W	T	P	R	D	A	P	D	K	E	P	E	U	H	C
E	H	U	N	G	Y	D	O	D	A	A	R	S	T	U
L	B	P	A	I	N	O	I	T	N	E	V	E	R	P
L	T	M	T	V	B	C	G	F	S	E	S	C	A	R
A	I	A	I	E	I	T	L	A	T	H	P	I	E	E
C	S	E	V	N	F	O	O	D	S	Y	D	O	B	S
I	I	T	E	C	W	R	L	A	B	R	E	H	H	S
S	V	S	R	E	U	Y	R	T	N	U	O	Ⓒ	C	U
Y	P	A	R	E	H	T	O	R	D	Y	H	Ⓐ	U	R
H	M	H	Y	U	S	E	S	N	I	G	I	Ⓡ	O	E
P	N	I	A	R	P	S	T	N	A	L	P	Ⓔ	T	S

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Acupressure, Aged, Alternative, Body, Books, Burn, Care, Cases, Choices, Country, Cramp, Cures, Cuts, Doctor, Doses, Earth, Eating, Flower, Foods, Give, Health, Herbal, Home, Hope, Hydrotherapy, Imagery, Lean, Magazine, Medicine, Mind, Origins, Pain, Pets, Physical, Plants, Power, Prevention, Rash, Remedy, Scar, Self, Sleep, Sprain, Steam, Stop, Total, Touch, Uses, Visit, Water, Well, Yoga

Yesterday's Answer: Internet

SALE: The topics of "Wonderword for Kids" appeal to younger fans but the puzzle difficulty matches what you've come to expect from Wonderword. For a limited time, the book is on sale for just $4 each (U.S. funds only), payable to Universal Press Syndicate. Include $3 postage for the first book order, $1 p&h for each additional book. Send to: Wonderword, 4520 Main St., Kansas City, Mo. 64111 or call toll-free, 1-800-255-5734, ext. 6688. Sorry, no online orders for this special offer.

CLASSIFIED ADS

CLASSIFIEDS RATES AND POLICIES

Saipan Tribune's Classifieds Section gives you the right exposure without hurting your pockets. Stretch your dollar and get results.

CLASSIFIED ADS

Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 7-day run on both print and online edition, for as low as $25 per 3 liner ad for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of below packages that fits your budget.

ADS (7DAYS)	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
• 3-Liner	$25
• 5-Liner	$35
• 3-Liner with picture	$45
• 5-Liner with picture	$55

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

As added service to our valued customers, you may now submit all your JVA placements for announcement/publication in *Saipan Tribune's* print and online edition and KZMI/KCNM at the same time. No more worries of having to go to two different locations every time you need to place job vacancy announcements. Special rates are available for JVA customers under this arrangement.

Print*

• 1st position	$10
• 2nd position	$3
• Succeeding positions	$1

LOWER RATES! Effective Feb. 3, 2007

Combo (Print and Online)*

• 1st position	$13
• 2nd position	$4
• Succeeding positions	$2

Radio (KCNM/KZMI)

• Up to 6 positions	$5
• More than 6 positions	$10

*These rates apply to all vacancy announcements that include corresponding benefits and which announcements are all under the same company name.

ADVERTISING DEADLINE

Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Job Vacancy Announcements

Monday Through Friday Issues: All ads placed before 12 noon will come out the next publication date.

Saturday And Sunday Issues:
- *Saipan Tribune:* All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on either Sunday or Monday issues.
- KCNM/KZMI: All ads placed on Friday (9am to 5pm) will be for Monday's radio announcement.

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

Job Vacancy Announcements

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, Saipan Tribune reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

FOR RENT RESIDENTIAL

Apartment room for rent: Fully furnished 1 brm, T/B, 24-hr water $210/month, near Conwood | Tel. 287-1372, 235-6748

NEW Rattan Furniture
FOR SALE
Expensive material
Call 235-4791,
433-9616, 285-7446

Generator Repair & Maintenace
233-5641
Open 7 Day a Week 9:00 AM-9:00 PM

FOR RENT RESIDENTIAL

Apartment for rent: 2br, 1bt, 24hrs water, Koblerville • $230/month-no deposit. Tel.: 288-0728 look for Edson

DEER AND TENT FOR SALE
DEER: 1 MALE & FEMALE with CALF
$2,600.00 OR BEST OFFER
TENT: 1 12X24 IN GOOD CONDITION
$700.00 OR BEST OFFER
Call Tony Joe @ 288-1350

WANTED
AVON
REPRESENTATIVE
Earn easy additional income
30% to 50% commission.
Please call Jojo Faller
at 483-1971, 323-4455

PSYCHIC GABRIELA REUNITES LOVERS
PSYCHIC GABRIELA IS A GOD GIFTED HEALER AND MIRACLE WORKER; REUNITES LOVERS; SOLVE ALL PROBLEMS GUARANTEED, 26-YEARS EXPERIENCE; REMOVE ALL NEGATIVITY; NEVER FAILED; CALLED ALL ENEMIES BY NAME; FREE READING. CALL 214-586-5685

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

Position: Housing Inspector/Housing Specialist Technician I

Opening Date: December 14, 2007
Closing Date: January 14, 2008

Starting Salary: PL 26/01 to PL 26/05 ($18,584.42 to $22,576.96 per annum)

Job Location: NMHC Central Office, Garapan, Saipan, MP 96950

Detailed job description, qualification requirements and other information may be picked up, together with NMHC's employment application form, during regular working hours at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan during regular working hours, 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays.

All applicants must complete and submit the NMHC Employment Application Form together with required documents that are listed in the Employment Application Package. Failure to provide the required documents will result in automatic disqualification. NMHC and all its properties are drug-free zones; therefore, selected applicant will be subject to pre-employment drug screening.

Applicants are requested to submit their original application and supporting documents to the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan, no later than 4:30 p.m., Friday, January 14, 2008 **OR MAILED AND POSTMARKED** no later than January 14, 2008, to the Executive Director, Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, P. O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950.

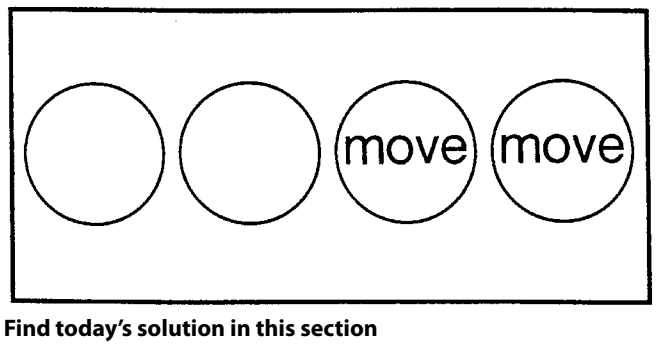
It is the policy of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) that the merit system will be applied and administered according to the principle of equal opportunity for all citizens and nationals as defined by its personnel regulations and the Northern Marianas Commonwealth Constitution regardless of age, race, sex, religion, political affiliation or belief, marital status, disability or place of origin.

For inquiries, please contact Edith C. Fejeran, Office Manager at (670) 234-9447/7689 or by email to ecfejeran@nmhc.gov.mp NMHC is a fair housing agency and an equal opportunity provider, lender and employer.

JOSHUA T. SASAMOTO
Corporate Director

WHATZIT?™

Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.



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Find today's solution in this section

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

1 FLORIST (F 13232)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self provided housing; self provided food; medical & workers compensation. Contact: Sae Woun Corporation dba Paradise Florist @233-9875.

1 HOUSEWORKER (F 13233)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self provided housing; self provide food; medical & workmen's compensation. Contact: Frances Pinaula @322-3090.

1 SALES REPRESENTATIVE (F 13234)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Workers medical & compensation provided. Contact: Ming Li Corporation dba Ming Li Store @234-2150.

1 MASON (F 13235)
Salary:$3.05/hour. Benefits: Workmen's compensation & medical expenses provided by the company. Contact: G.C.G. & Company, Inc. @322-7166.

1 (ENGLISH) TRANSLATOR (F 13236)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Provided housing; self food; medical & workers compensation. Contact: Yin Jia Corporation dba Embroidery @288-1918.

1 HEAVY EQUIPMENT OPERATOR (F 13237)
Salary:$3.05-$3.55/hour. Benefits: Workers compensation & medical. Contact: ASC Arch Structure Corporation dba ASC Construction @235-8948.

1 CARPENTER (F 13238)
Salary:$3.05-$3.55/hour. Benefits: Workers compensation & medical. Contact: ASC Arch Structure Corporation dba ASC Construction @235-8948.

1 MAINT. BUILDING REPAIRER (F 13239)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self provided housing; self provided food; medical expense & workers compensation. Contact: Yaong Corporation @235-8727.

1 SALES REPRESENTATIVE (F 13240)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self provided housing; self provided food; medical expense & workers compensation. Contact: Yaong Corporation @235-8727.

WHATZIT Solution:
Move in the right circles

NURSING ASSISTANTS NORTH CAROLINA, USA

Interview date: 1/15 & 1/16/08 at Century Hotel, Saipan
Requirement: High School education; US citizenship or residency; certification or experience a plus. Training will be given to those who qualify.
Offer: Full time employment; certification training provided, airfare to North Carolina, first month housing plus other benefits.
To apply or register for the interview contact:

World Health Resources, Inc.
www.whrgroup.com;
(201) 662-8907, (800) 742-2446
Or fax resume to (201) 662-9644.
Email: info@whrgroup.com.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
RFP 08-009

CANCELLED

Construction Marine and Mari-Culture Center

Northern Marianas College is canceling this request for sealed proposals for construction of the Paupau Beach Marine and Mari-Culture Demonstration Center.

Specifications and Scope of Work may be picked up at the NMC Procurement Office, bldg. N Room 4, Monday to Friday between the hours of 8: 30-11:30 a.m. and 1:00-4:30 p.m. For Off-island Proposers, you may request a copy via fax or e-mail.

This solicitation does not constitute an offer and does not obligate the College in any way. The NMC reserves the right to reject any and/or all proposals for any reason and waive any defect in said proposals, or cancel in part or its entirety this RFP, if it deems, in its sole discretion, it is in the best interest of the College.

All costs incurred by the proposer to prepare a response this solicitation and subsequent inquiries shall be borne by the proposer.

Proposals deadline are due February 01, 2008 on at 10:00 a.m. Saipan time at the Northern Marianas College, Procurement Office, P.O. Box 501250, Saipan, MP 96950.

All submittals shall become the property of NMC and shall not be returned.

Duane R.T. Sablan
NMC Procurement & Property Management Office

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

1 ACCOUNTANT (F 13241)
Salary:$3.55-$3.70/hour. Benefits: Self provided housing; self provided food; medical expense & workers compensation. Contact: Yaong Corporation @235-8727.

1 CARPENTER (F 13242)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self provided housing; self provided food; medical expense & workers compensation. Contact: Yaong Corporation @235-8727.

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1 COMPUTER SYSTEM ANALYST (F 13243)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Duties: Analyzes user requirement, procedure and problems to automotive processing or improve existing computer system. Reviews computer system capabilities, workflow and scheduling limitations to determine if requested program change is possible within the existing system. Must have knowledge in RealWorld. Acctg. Softwire & Synchronics POS. Benefits: Self provided housing; self provided food; medical & workers compensation. Contact: Saipan Computer Services Inc. @234-9110.

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1 LABORATORY TECHNICIAN (F 13244)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Duties: Conducts chemical and physical laboratory tests of solid materials, liquids, and gases, and analyzes test data for variety of purposes, such as research product development, quality control, criminal investigation, and establishing standards, involving experimental, theoretical, or practical application of chemistry and related sciences: Sets up laboratory equipment and instrumentation required for tests, research, or process, control. Tests and analyzes products, such as food, drugs, fertilizers, plastics, paints, detergents, paper, petroleum, and cement, to determine strength, stability, purity, chemical content, and other characteristics. Tests and analyzes materials and substances, such as ores, minerals, gases, soil, water, and pollutants. Documents results of tests and analyses. May prepare chemical solutions for use in processing materials, following standardized formulas or experimental procedures. May test and analyze radioactive and biological materials, applying knowledge of radiochemical procedures, emission spectrometry, and related techniques. Benefits: Self provided housing; self provided food; medical & workers compensation. Contact: Quality Water Inc. @233-8002.

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1 COMPUTER TECHNICIAN (F 13245)
Salary:$660.00-$1,000.00/monthly. Benefits: Self provided housing; self provided food; medical & workers compensation. Contact: Saipan Computer Services Inc. @234-9110.

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1 HOUSEWORKER (F 13246)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: $100.00/housing deductible; $100.00/food deductible; workers compensation & medical benefits. Contact: Luis/Tomasa Camacho @322-5504.

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1 BLDG. MAINTENANCE REPAIRER (F 13247)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self arranged food; medical & workers compensation provided by employer. Contact: Mu Sung Corporation @288-1363.

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1 OFFICE MANAGER (F 13248)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self arranged food; medical & workmen's compensation provided by employer. Contact: Diving Shop Light House, Inc. @256-5473.

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1 COMMERCIAL CLEANER (F 13249)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self arranged food; medical & workmen's compensation provided by employer. Contact: Dark Horse Corporation @234-5274.

1 GENERAL SUPERVISOR (F 13250)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self arranged food; medical & workmen's compensation provided by employer. Contact: Dark Horse Corporation @234-5274.

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1 GENERAL CLERK (F 13251)
Salary:$4.05/hour. Benefits: Employee provided housing; workman's compensation; health insurance & 40 hrs paid sick leave per annum. Contact: Health Professional Corporation dba Saipan Health Clinic @234-2901.

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1 LIVE IN MAID (F 13252)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: $100.00/charge housing monthly; $100.00/charge food monthly & medical. Contact: Geraldine Cruz @287-5770.

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1 ACCOUNTANT (F 13253)
Salary:$3.55-$9.50/hour. Benefits: Workers compensation; life insurance & 80% company share on medical premium. Contact: Saipan Shipping Company, Inc. @322-9706/07.

1 (ACCOUNTING) MANAGER (F 13254)
Salary:$1,000.00-$2,600.00/monthly. Benefits: Workers compensation insurance; life insurance & 80% company share on medical premium. Transportation provided to & from work. Contact: Saipan Shipping Company, Inc. @322-9706/07.

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1 CARPENTER (F 13255)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical re-imbursable & workers compensation insurance. Contact: B&P Inc. dba B&P Smart Furniture @234-9357.

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1 BUILDING MAINTENANCE REPAIRER (F 13256)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self provided housing; self provided food; workmen's compensation & medical. Contact: J. Lee Development Corp. @322-6290.

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1 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT (F 13257)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Employee self housing; employee self food; free medical & worker compensation. Contact: Royal Supplies Inc. @288-3388.

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1 (BOAT FISHING) DECKHAND (F 13258)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self provided housing; self provided food; medical & workman's compensation. Contact: L.I.F.E. Inc. @234-3533/233-0533.

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1 SUPERVISOR (FOUNTAIN SERVER) (F 13259)
Salary:$3.55-$4.50/hour. Benefits: Workers compensation & medical. Contact: 3's Inc. dba Hula Girl @234-3533.

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1 SALES REPRESENTATIVE (F 13260)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; employee provided food; medical expense & workers compensation. Contact: Henry E. Elayda dba Henry Store @235-9382.

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1 WAITER/WAITRESS (F 13261)
Salary:$3.55-$4.05/hour. Benefits: Medical & workmen's compensation. Contact: YCO Corp. dba YCO TrueValue Hardware/Do It Best Hardware/Liberty Dept. Store/YCO Construction/Appliance Outlets/ Liberty Dept. Store/Naked Fish Bar & Grill/Servistar Motorsports @ 233-3112/3.

1 BUILDING MAINTENANCE REPAIRER (F 13262)
Salary:$3.60-$4.05/hour. Benefits: Medical & workmen's compensation. Contact: YCO Corp. dba YCO TrueValue Hardware/Do It Best Hardware/Liberty Dept. Store/YCO Construction/Appliance Outlets/ Liberty Dept. Store/Naked Fish Bar & Grill/Servistar Motorsports @ 233-3112/3.

1 COMMERCIAL CLEANER (F 13263)
Salary:$3.55-$4.05/hour. Benefits: Medical & workmen's compensation. Contact: YCO Corp. dba YCO TrueValue Hardware/Do It Best Hardware/Liberty Dept. Store/YCO Construction/Appliance Outlets/ Liberty Dept. Store/Naked Fish Bar & Grill/Servistar Motorsports @ 233-3112/3.

1 MAINTENANCE REPAIRER (F 13264)
Salary:$3.55-$4.05/hour. Benefits: Medical & workmen's compensation. Contact: YCO Corp. dba YCO TrueValue Hardware/Do It Best Hardware/Liberty Dept. Store/YCO Construction/Appliance Outlets/ Liberty Dept. Store/Naked Fish Bar & Grill/Servistar Motorsports @ 233-3112/3.

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

Job Vacancy Re-Announcement

Job Vacancy No. 08-002
Opening Date: 01/11/07
Closing Date: 01/25/07

ACCOUNTANT

DUTIES: Under the overall supervision of the Accounting Officer or his or her designee, the incumbent's duties and responsibilities are as follows. May supervise accounting support staff to include: prioritizing and assigning work; conducting performance evaluations; ensuring staff are trained; and, making hiring, termination, and disciplinary recommendations. Maintains, monitors, and balances assigned funds. Performs professional accounting responsibilities, which includes: preparing general journal entries; ensuring proper departmental approvals; auditing accounts; assisting with annual audits; and, performing other related activities. Researches information on accounts for customers, internal departments, and other interested parties. Prepares, reviews, and submits a variety of reports, reconciliations, and statements to and from internal departments, financial institutions, and/or Local, State, and Federal agencies. Performs month-end and year-end closing of books of accounts for assigned funds. Performs other duties of a similar nature or level. SUBJECT TO PRE-EMPLOYMENT DRUG SCREENING.

LOCATION: *COMMONWEALTH UTILITIES CORPORATION, COMPTROLLER, SAIPAN*

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS: Any combination equivalent to a Bachelors Degree in Accounting, Finance or a related field and four years of professional level accounting or finance experience. **Knowledge of:** Supervisory principles; Generally Accepted Accounting Principles and other applicable laws, rules and regulations; Basic mathematics; Fixed asset accounting. **Skill in:** Monitoring and evaluating staff; Prioritizing and assigning work to staff; Applying Federal, State, and/or Local laws, rules, and regulations; Performing mathematical calculations; Applying accounting procedures and principles; Recording, analyzing, verifying, reconciling, and reporting accounting transactions; Operating a 10-key machine; Preparing and analyzing financial statements and reports; Using computers and related software applications; Communication, interpersonal skills as applied to interaction with coworkers, supervisor, the general public, etc. sufficient to exchange or convey information and to receive work direction. APPLICANTS MAY BE TESTED.

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Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
State Board of Education
Public School System
P. O. Box 501370, Saipan, MP 96950

Invitation For Bid
IFB 08-014

The CNMI Public School System and the CNMI State Board of Education are soliciting competitive sealed bids for the **Supply, Delivery, and Installation of Accordion Type Aluminum Typhoon Shutters for Various PSS Head Start Centers located throughout the CNMI**. Detailed information on the Scope of Work is available at the PSS Procurement & Supply Office located on the 3rd floor of the NMI Retirement Fund Building, Capitol Hill, Saipan, MP 96950.

All bids shall be in a sealed envelope face marked "IFB 08-014" containing (1) original and three (3) copies and submitted to the PSS Procurement and Supply Office no later than February 8, 2007 at 10:00 a.m. Responsibility Determination documents shall be placed in a separate envelope marked "IFB 08-014, CONFIDENTIAL - Responsibility Determination" (1-original and one copy). Any bid after the aforementioned date and time will not be accepted under any circumstance.

Technical questions shall be in writing and addressed to Mr. Carl Dela Cruz, Acting Procurement & Supply Officer, via fax # (670) 664-3791. Alternatively, questions may be e-mailed to the following address: **delacruzc@pss.cnmi.mp**.

Contractors are required to submit with their bid, a copy of their valid CNMI business license.

The Public School System reserves the right to award single or multiple awards or to reject any or all bids, in whole or in part, if to do so is in the best interest of the Public School System.

All bids shall become the property of the Public School System.

/S/ Dr. David M. Borja, D.B.A.
Commissioner of Education

/S/ Carl F. Dela Cruz, M.B.A.
Acting P & S Officer

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

1 STOREKEEPER (F 13265)
Salary:$3.60-$4.05/hour. Benefits: Medical & workmen's compensation. Contact: YCO Corp. dba YCO TrueValue Hardware/Do It Best Hardware/Liberty Dept. Store/YCO Construction/Appliance Outlets/Liberty Dept. Store/Naked Fish Bar & Grill/Servistar Motorsports @ 233-3112/3.

Richard J. Brostrom
P.O. Box 500409
Saipan, MP 96950
Telephone No. 483-5723

PRO SE

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

In Re The Matter Of The Petition To Appoint General Guardianship For:	)	FCD GU CIVIL ACTION NO. 08-0007
ZOE ALEXANDRA SCHORR, Minor Child By:	)	**NOTICE OF HEARING**
RICHARD J. BROSTROM, Petitioner.	)	

Notice is hereby given that the above-entitled matter is set for a hearing on January 14, 2008, at 1:30 p.m. in Courtroom 205, before the Associate Judge Kenneth L. Govendo.

Dated this 9th day of January, 2008.

Bernadita A. Sablan
Clerk of Court

/s/ By: Deputy Clerk of Court

1 WAREHOUSE WORKER (F 13266)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Workman's compensation & medical insurance. Contact: Auntie Mag's Food & Catering Services Inc. dba Auntie Mag's Food & Catering @288-4799.

2 FOOD SERVER (F 13267)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Workman's compensation & medical insurance. Contact: Auntie Mag's Food & Catering Services Inc. dba Auntie Mag's Food & Catering @288-4799.

1 COOK (F 13268)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Workman's compensation & medical insurance. Contact: Auntie Mag's Food & Catering Services Inc. dba Auntie Mag's Food & Catering @288-4799.

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1 WAITRESS/WAITER (F 13269)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arrange housing; self provide food; medical & workmen compensation. Contact: Roy Jen Enterprise Inc. dba Bud's Bar @898-4866.

1 WAITRESS/WAITER (F 13270)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arrange housing; self provide food; medical & workmen compensation. Contact: Roy Jen Enterprise Inc. dba Bud's Bar @898-4866.

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2 MASON (F 13271)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Employer housing; employee food; medical & worksman compensation. Contact: Vargas Corporation @235-0297.

1 CARPENTER (F 13272)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Employer housing; employee food; medical & worksman compensation. Contact: Vargas Corporation @235-0297.

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Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
State Board of Education
Public School System
P. O. Box 501370, Saipan, MP 96950

Request for Proposal
RFP 08-011

The Public School System and the CNMI State Board of Education are soliciting competitive sealed proposals for the **Preventative Maintenance, Repair, Parts Supply and General Automotive Services for the Public School System Bus and Vehicle Fleets**. Detailed information on the Scope of Work is available at the PSS Procurement & Supply Office located on the 3rd floor of the NMI Retirement Fund Building, Capitol Hill,, Saipan, MP 96950.

All proposals shall be in a sealed envelope face marked "RFP 08-011" containing one (1) original and three (3) copies and submitted to the PSS Procurement and Supply Office no later than February 6, 2008 at 2:00 p.m. Responsibility Determination documents shall be placed in a separate envelope marked "RFP 08-011, CONFIDENTIAL - Responsibility Determination" (1-original and one copy). Any bid after the aforementioned date and time will not be accepted under any circumstance.

Technical questions shall be in writing and addressed to Mr. Carl de la Cruz, Acting Procurement & Supply Officer, via fax # (670) 664-3791. Alternatively, questions may be e-mailed to the following address: **delacruzc@pss.cnmi.mp**.

Contractors are required to submit with their proposal, a copy of their valid CNMI Business License.

The Public School System reserves the right to award single or multiple awards, to split awards, or to reject any or all proposals, in whole or in part, if to do so is in the best interest of the Public School System.

All proposals shall become the property of the Public School System.

/S/ Dr. David M. Borja, D.B.A.
Commissioner of Education

/S/ Carl F. de la Cruz, M.B.A.
Acting P&S Officer

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
State Board of Education
Public School System
P.O. Box 501370, Saipan, MP 96950

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
RFP 08-012

The Public School System and the CNMI State Board of Education are soliciting competitive sealed proposals for the **Repair and Servicing of the Fire Alarm Simplex System** at various public schools. Detailed information on the Scope of Work is available at the PSS Procurement & Supply Office located on the 3rd floor of the NMI Retirement Fund Building, Capitol Hill, Saipan, MP 96950.

All proposals shall be in a sealed envelope face marked "RFP 08-012" containing (1) original and three (3) copies and submitted to the PSS Procurement and Supply Office no later than January 23, 2007 at 2:00 p.m. Responsibility Determination documents shall be placed in a separate envelope marked "RFP 08-012, CONFIDENTIAL - Responsibility Determination" (1-original and one copy). Any bid after the aforementioned date and time will not be accepted under any circumstance.

A pre-submission conference will be held at the PSS Capital Improvement Projects Office on January 10, 2007 at 10:00 a.m.

Technical questions shall be in writing and addressed to Mr. Carl de la Cruz, Acting Procurement & Supply Officer, via fax # (670) 664-3791. Alternatively, questions may be e-mailed to the following address: delacruzc@pss.cnmi.mp.

Contractors are required to submit with their proposal, a copy of their valid CNMI Business License.

The Public School System reserves the right to award single or multiple awards or to reject any or all proposals, in whole or in part, if to do so is in the best interest of the Public School System.

All proposals shall become the property of the Public School System.

/S/ Dr. David M. Borja, D.B.A.
Commissioner of Education

/S/ Carl de la Cruz, M.B.A.
Acting P & S Officer

Hawks finally beat Cavs at home

ATLANTA (AP)—Joe Johnson scored 27 points to lead five Atlanta scorers in double figures and the Hawks held off a late comeback to beat the Cavaliers 90-81 on Wednesday for their first home win over Cleveland since 2003.

The Hawks ended a four-game losing streak and snapped Cleveland's four-game winning streak, giving the Cavaliers their first loss in 2008.

The Hawks ended the Cavaliers' six-game winning streak in Atlanta. The Cavaliers' last loss in Atlanta was Nov. 22, 2003.

James, who also had 10 rebounds and six assists, scored 14 points in the fourth quarter—more than any teammate managed in the game.

Josh Smith had 19 points and Marvin Williams and Josh Childress each added 12 for Atlanta. Rookie Al Horford had 10 points and 15 rebounds.

Raptors 109, 76ers 96

At Toronto, Anthony Parker matched his season high with 22 points, Chris Bosh had 21 and Toronto handed Philadelphia its season-high fifth straight loss.

Jose Calderon had 17 points and nine assists for the Raptors, and Carlos Delfino added 12 points.

Toronto snapped a three-game home losing streak and avoided its longest home skid since a five-game slide from March 29-April 9, 2006.

Willie Green led the 76ers with 18 points, Iguodala and rookie Thaddeus Young both scored 16 and Andre Miller had 14 points and seven assists. Philadelphia lost its fifth straight road game to drop to 7-12 away from home this season.

Rockets 101, Knicks 92

At New York, Yao Ming scored 36 points, and the Houston Rockets got big final quarters from Rafer Alston and Luis Scola to beat New York for their season-high fourth straight victory.

Alston added 20 points, eight assists and six rebounds for the Rockets, who seized control immediately after Knicks coach Isiah Thomas was ejected in the opening minute of the final quarter when he came onto the floor to argue with referee Eric Lewis.

The Rockets improved to 6-2 since All-Star guard Tracy McGrady went out of the lineup with a strained tendon in his left knee. Scola finished with 19 points, nine in the final quarter.

Jamal Crawford scored 21 points, Nate Robinson had 16 and Stephon Marbury 15 for the Knicks, who won Tuesday in Chicago but failed to match their season high of two straight victories.

Nets 99, SuperSonics 88

At East Rutherford, New Jersey, Richard Jefferson scored 28 points, and New Jersey cruised in a blowout that probably prevented Jason Kidd from recording a fourth straight triple-double.

Kidd finished with 16 points, 11 assists and five rebounds in a game in which he sat on the bench for the final 12 1/2 minutes.

Vince Carter added 18 points and eight rebounds as the Nets won for the eighth time in 10 games.

Johan Petro came off the bench and tied his career high with 22 points for Seattle, which lost its fifth in a row and seventh in eight games. Nick Collison tied his season-high with 18 points, while rookie Kevin Durant, who sprained an ankle against Cleveland on Tuesday night, added 15.

Bobcats 95, Celtics 83

At Boston, Jason Richardson scored 34 points and grabbed nine rebounds, Gerald Wallace had 15 points and 10 rebounds boards, and Charlotte handed Boston its fourth loss of the season.

The loss snapped a nine-game winning streak for Boston (29-4) and spoiled its bid for the fastest start in team history to 30 wins. The 1959-60 Celtics started 30-4 before going on to win the NBA title.

The Bobcats, who entered with an Eastern Conferenece-worst 1-11 road mark, also got 16 points and eight assists from Raymond Felton.

Kevin Garnett led Boston with 24 points and eight rebounds. Paul Pierce scored 13 points on just 4-for-14 shooting.

Lakers 109, Hornets 80

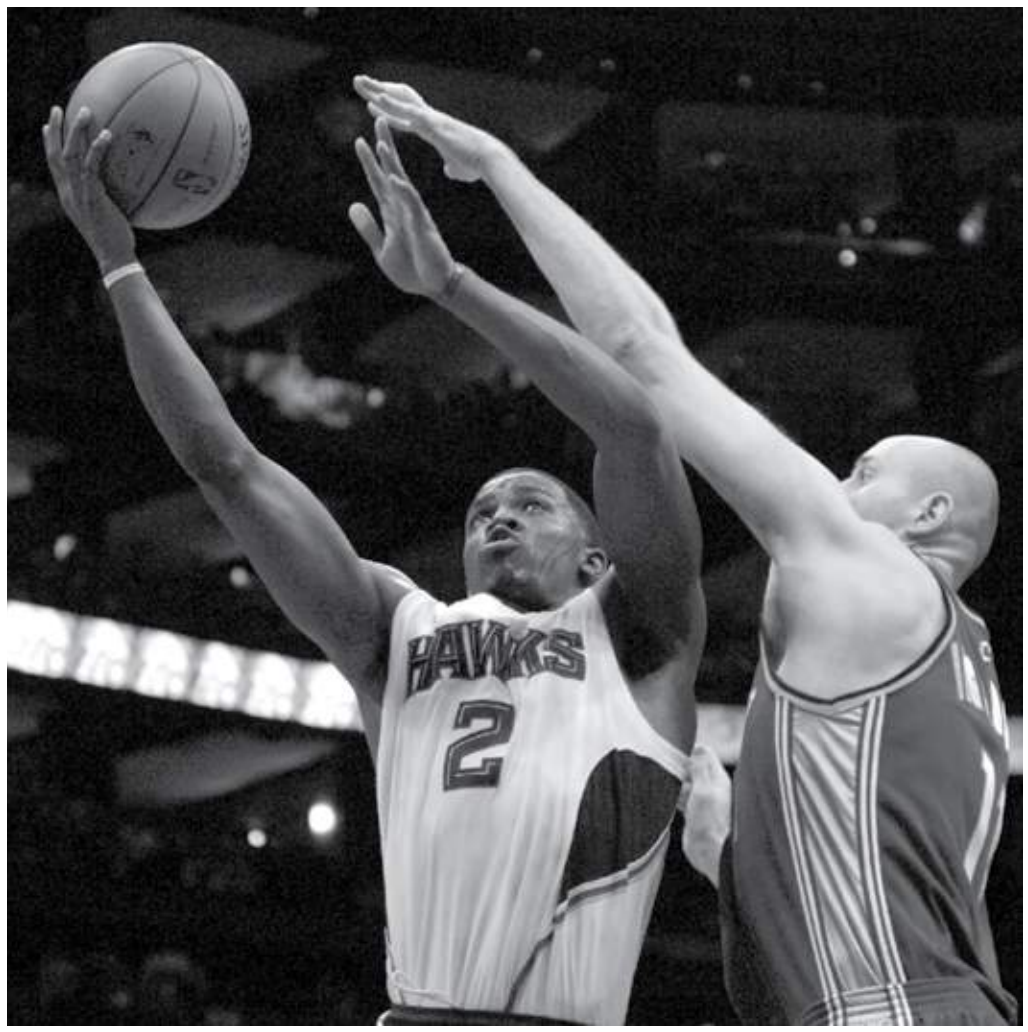
At New Orleans, Kobe Bryant scored 19 points, Andrew Bynum added 17 and the Los Angeles Lakers downed New Orleans for their fourth straight win.

The Lakers made 54.9 percent of their shots, hitting nine 3-pointers and while outscoring New Orleans 52-36 inside. Los Angeles scored on its first eight possessions and led by double digits for most of the game.

Chris Paul scored 32 points and David West added 19 points for New Orleans, which shot 36.9 percent.

Bucks 98, Heat 92

At Milwaukee, Mo Williams scored a season-high 35 points to help Milwaukee send Miami to its ninth straight loss.



AP

Atlanta Hawks guard Joe Johnson (2) takes a shot against Cleveland Cavaliers center Zydrunas Ilgauskas, right, of Lithuania, during the second quarter of an NBA basketball game, Wednesday, Jan. 9, 2008, at Philips Arena in Atlanta.

Dwyane Wade scored 34 points to lead Miami, which extended its longest losing streak since dropping 12 in a row in the 2001-02 season and also lost its eighth straight on the road. Jason Williams scored a season-high 23 points in his first game since recovering from inflammation in his left knee.

Andrew Bogut scored 17 points to lead Milwaukee, which played without guard Michael Redd for the fourth game in a row because of a deep thigh bruise.

Mavericks 102, Pistons 86

At Dallas, Dirk Nowitzki had 23 points to lead Dallas in scoring again, and the Mavericks handed the Pistons their second straight loss after an 11-game winning streak.

Nowitzki led the Mavericks in scoring for the 10th straight game on 10-of-15 shooting, while Devin Harris had 19 points. Jerry Stackhouse and Jason Terry had 15 potions each.

Richard Hamilton had 18 points to lead the Pistons, while Billups had 16.

Suns 129, Pacers 122, OT

At Phoenix, Raja Bell sank two 3-pointers in the final 2 1/2 minutes of overtime and the Phoenix Suns rallied from 16 points down without Steve Nash.

Bell scored a season-high 27, including 6-of-11 on 3s. Leandro Barbosa scored 25 of his 27 points after halftime, 16 in the third quarter, and the Suns handed the Pacers their seventh consecutive road loss.

Amare Stoudemire had 25 points, including a turnaround 10-footer from the baseline that tied it with 26 seconds left in regulation. Stoudemire clinched it by making five of six free throws in the final 1:18 of overtime.

Danny Granger and Shawne Williams scored 22 points apiece for Indiana.

Trail Blazers 109, Warriors 91

At Portland, Oregon, Steve Blake had a season-high 24 points before leaving the game with a left calf injury and Portland won for the 17th time in 18 games.

LaMarcus Aldridge had 19 points for the Blazers, who led by as many as 25 points. Joel Przybilla had 10 points and 10 rebounds.

Golden State was led by Matt Barnes with 14 points. Baron Davis, the team's top scorer, had an off night with four points.

Magic 113, Clippers 106

At Los Angeles, Hedo Turkoglu scored 13 of his 28 points in the fourth quarter, five teammates reached double figures, and Orlando snapped a season-high three-game losing streak.

Rashard Lewis scored 20 points, Dwight Howard had 17 points and 17 rebounds and Jameer Nelson added 14 points and nine assists for the Magic (23-15), who have an NBA-high 16 road victories.

Turkoglu had seven rebounds and seven assists to go with his 28 points, which matched a season-high.

Corey Maggette scored 27 points to equal his season high for the Clippers (10-22), who lost for the 10th time in 11 home games and for the ninth time in 10 games overall. Tim Thomas added 20 points, Chris Kaman had 17 points and nine rebounds, and Cuttino Mobley scored 16 for Los Angeles.

Riley has no plans to resign as Heat's coach

MILWAUKEE (AP)—Pat Riley has no definitive plans to go anywhere, dismissing published reports that he was leaning toward vacating his coaching role with the Miami Heat after the season to focus on his front-office duties.

Riley said before Miami's game Wednesday night against Milwaukee that he was being philosophical when talking about the dual roles he holds and potentially stepping aside.

"I always re-evaluate," Riley said. "I'm one of those guys, a good old Irish Catholic who worries a lot so I re-evaluate all the time. I throw the ball up in the air and 10 Hail Marys and 10 Our Fathers and hope that it works out. That's how I do it."

The 62-year-old Riley, under contract through 2009-10, dismissed about a half-dozen questions on whether he would fulfill his contract as Miami has slid to 8-27, worst in the Eastern Conference, and lost by 10 on Tuesday night to Minnesota, which currently holds the worst record in the NBA.

"Don't ask me that question. At this time it's like 'Yes' or 'No,'" he said. "There are hypotheticals in a season like this. You don't want to turn the knife too early on things. Just let things work its way out."

In August, Riley said he planned to coach the Heat for the three remaining years on his contract, an announcement that ended months of speculation about his future. He said Wednesday night he has not thought about his future when he spoke to a reporter at a South Florida newspaper.

"I don't even want to talk about that. We were talking about the dual responsibilities of being a president and head coach and there are conflicts there and I have to evaluate those all the time," he said.

But Riley did acknowledge that his responsibilities are tougher when Miami plays poorly.

"I very rarely have to answer questions about it when we're winning," Riley said. "It's only when you're losing."

Udonis Haslem said Riley deserves credit for what he's done, and that he has a right to make up his mind in time.

"It's a situation that none of us expected to be in," Haslem said. "He's probably in a little bit of shock just like we are, but at the same time, as long as he's been in this league I don't think there's too many situations that he hasn't been in or he hasn't seen.

"If anybody has the knowledge or the experience of how to get out of a situation like this, it's him. We've got to do it as a team, continue to fight, follow his lead and hopefully things will come together."

Riley gave up coaching in 2003, then returned when Stan Van Gundy stepped down in December 2005 and led Miami to the 2006 NBA title.

A year ago, Riley left the team for six weeks to undergo knee surgery and a hip replacement. Assistant Ron Rothstein filled in. After Riley returned, the Heat were swept out of last year's playoffs by the Chicago Bulls.

Some of Riley's offseason moves didn't work out as planned. Dwyane Wade was sidelined because of knee rehab at the start of the season. Shaquille O'Neal has battled thigh and hip injuries, and his relationship with Riley has been the source of much debate after word leaked of a practice-court argument between the star center and the star coach.

Riley's contract ends at the same time that O'Neal's does, while it is also the final season of Wade's guaranteed contract. This season, the Heat have been plagued by poor defense, depth and outside shooting.

Only two men—Phil Jackson and Red Auerbach—have led more teams to NBA championships than Riley, whose title with the Heat in 2006 was his fifth as a head coach.

"I'm not assessing anything," Riley said of his future. "It was simply about the conflicts and there are conflicts about the job."

Gossage can see why some use steroids

NEW YORK (AP)—Goose Gossage can understand why some players would try steroids. With major league salaries so high, finding a way to extend a career is an awfully tempting proposition.

"Chances are, I probably would have done it, too," Gossage said Wednesday.

That doesn't mean baseball's newest Hall of Famer is giving Roger Clemens and Barry Bonds a free pass on their alleged use of performance-enhancing drugs. Whether throwing a fastball or speaking his mind, Gossage has never been one to let up—and he's not about to start.

"I've been in that situation, trying to prolong my career with the money that was out there to be made at this time in baseball. I can't sit here and say that I would not have done it," he said. "But had I done it, I'm going to face the consequences. And the consequences are, that whether they belong in the Hall of Fame or not, the records can't stand.

"These guys downplay the significance of steroids. Don't even go there. I don't buy it at all," Gossage added at a news conference. "These guys are getting better the older they get? Nah. The body doesn't work that way. And baseball is a young man's game."

After being passed over eight times, Gossage was finally elected to the Hall of Fame on Tuesday, becoming only the fifth reliever to receive baseball's highest honor. He pitched for nine big league teams from 1972-94, but the Hall will depict him wearing a New York Yankees cap on his plaque.

"I was hoping, but I still didn't know until just now," said Gossage, who earned his only World Series title with the 1978 Yankees. "There was nothing like pitching in New York. ... Getting to play for the Yankees was kind of an out-of-body experience."

Years from now, Clemens could join Gossage in Cooperstown. That seems uncertain, though, after Clemens was the biggest star implicated in last month's Mitchell Report on doping in baseball.

The Rocket has repeatedly denied the allegations, and he was defiant Monday at a news conference in Houston filled with potential Hall of Fame voters from the Baseball Writers' Association of America.

"You keep your vote," Clemens said. "I don't need the Hall of Fame to justify that I put my butt on the line and I worked my tail off, and I defy anybody to say I did it by cheating or taking any shortcuts, OK?"

How did that sit with Gossage, who had an agonizing wait on the ballot?

"I don't know that that's really what he meant," Gossage said. "I can't imagine Roger saying that to begin with, because I know the Hall of Fame means everything to all of us. I think he was getting frustrated up there.

"He's fighting for his career, his whole life right now, as far as public opinion and the admiration that he's gotten. I said this before, that Roger always liked a lot of attention. Well, he's getting plenty of attention now for sure."

AP

National Baseball Hall of Fame electee Goose Gossage, framed by a plastic goose he received at the event, answers a question at his news conference in New York, Wednesday Jan. 9, 2008.

Much of the information in the Mitchell Report linking Clemens to steroids and human growth hormone came from his former trainer, Brian McNamee.

Clemens, a seven-time Cy Young Award winner who ranks eighth in major league history with 354 career wins, filed a defamation lawsuit against McNamee and gave a TV interview in which the pitcher said McNamee injected him only with vitamin B-12 and the painkiller lidocaine.

Both have been asked to appear before Congress at a hearing on Feb. 13.

"That's why I think that he's fighting so hard to keep his reputation in tact is because of the Hall of Fame. That's just my opinion," Gossage said, referring to Clemens. "I think where the frustration comes in is the possibility of not going into the Hall of Fame is tremendous."

The 56-year-old Gossage, his famous Fu Manchu mustache now gray, will be inducted July 27 along with five men elected last month by the revamped Veterans Committee: former commissioner Bowie Kuhn, former Dodgers owner Walter O'Malley, managers Dick Williams and Billy Southworth and ex-Pirates owner Barney Dreyfuss.

Gossage got his nickname because he stuck his neck way out like a goose while peering in to his catcher for the sign, and he definitely likes to have fun. In addition to his Hall of Fame news conference Wednesday, he read the Top Ten List on the "Late Show with David Letterman."

House panel postpones Clemens hearing

WASHINGTON (AP)—Congress wants to be prepared when Roger Clemens and his former trainer, Brian McNamee, head to Capitol Hill. The House hearing involving Clemens, McNamee and Andy Pettitte was postponed Wednesday from Jan. 16 until Feb. 13, giving lawmakers more time to gather evidence, to take depositions from the witnesses and to coordinate their investigation with the Justice Department.

The House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform was to begin meeting with lawyers for the witnesses Thursday. Clemens' attorney, Rusty Hardin, said he hopes to meet with committee staffers next week. In addition, McNamee is to meet with federal prosecutors Thursday in New York.

"Roger hasn't done anything," Hardin said. "The federal government looking at Roger is fine with me."

Plans are still in place for the Jan. 15 hearing before the same committee about the Mitchell Report on baseball's Steroids Era. The witnesses that day will be commissioner Bud Selig, union leader Donald Fehr and former Senate majority leader George Mitchell, the report's author.

Questioned by federal prosecutors last year, McNamee said he injected Clemens with steroids and human growth hormone in 1998, 2000 and 2001. Prosecutors had him repeat those charges to Mitchell, and since the report was issued last month, Clemens has repeatedly and vehemently denied the allegations.

A lawyer for McNamee said Wednesday his client wants immunity from the House committee. Hardin said Clemens will not request immunity.

McNamee will meet with the BALCO prosecutors who are in the area for former track star Marion Jones' sentencing Friday. Jones pleaded guilty to lying to investigators about steroid use and a check-fraud scheme.

"They want to talk to him while they're in town," said Earl Ward, McNamee's primary lawyer.

Does this mean prosecutors are now turning their attention to Clemens?

"Nothing like that," Ward said. "They just wanted grab a cup coffee, that's all. It's just an informal, quick meeting."

Last week, Congress asked seven-time Cy Young Award winner Clemens, teammate and friend Pettitte and their ex-trainer, McNamee, to testify under oath. Also invited were former Yankees player Chuck Knoblauch and Kirk Radomski, the former New York Mets clubhouse attendant who was one of the main sources of evidence for the Mitchell Report.

Radomski pleaded guilty in April to federal felony charges of distributing steroids and laundering money, and he is scheduled to be sentenced Feb. 8.

"The Justice Department told the committee it would be helpful if we waited until after Radomski is sentenced," the committee's minority staff director, David Marin, wrote in an e-mail to The Associated Press. "This also gives us more time to delve into more recent developments, gather more information, and depose all witnesses before they testify in public."

McNamee lawyer Richard Emery said he believed the postponement was an act of respect toward Mitchell and Tuesday's session.

"He wanted it to be focused on steroids issues and the larger policy issues instead of everyone waiting with bated breath for the professional wrestler to get up there and make a statement," Emery said. "Roger became the main attraction. Usually Congress loves those kind of shows."

Plenty has happened since the committee called for the Clemens-Pettitte-McNamee hearing last Friday.

Clemens, who ranks eighth in major league history with 354 wins, filed a defamation lawsuit Sunday against McNamee. Also Sunday, a TV interview with Clemens aired in which he said McNamee injected him only with vitamin B-12 and the painkiller lidocaine. The pitcher then held a news conference Monday, when he said, "I'm going to Congress, and I'm going to tell the truth," and played a recording of a 17-minute telephone conversation with McNamee that Clemens' side secretly taped.

That tape could be among the items requested by the committee, the same House panel that brought sluggers Mark McGwire, Sammy Sosa and Rafael Palmeiro to Capitol Hill in March 2005. No depositions were taken before that hearing.

"We are considering requests for information from all relevant sources," said Karen Lightfoot, communications director for the committee's chairman, California Democrat Henry Waxman.

McNamee's attorneys have urged the committee to obtain a recording of a conversation between his client and investigators who work for Clemens' law firm. That meeting took place Dec. 12, a day before the Mitchell Report was released.

Pettitte acknowledged McNamee injected him twice with HGH. Radomski is alleged to have supplied McNamee with performance-enhancing drugs.

"I'll be very interested to see the order of the depositions, whether we will be provided with other people's depositions when they are taken," Emery said.

If the witnesses are allowed to see others' depositions, that could create an advantage for those testifying later in the process.

Hardin said: "The one thing I want to make certain is, is that we don't educate McNamee as to which story to tell these days."

McNamee reached an agreement in which he would not be prosecuted as long as he was truthful in what he told federal investigators and Mitchell. His lawyers will seek a similar agreement with the committee, Emery said.

Marin declined to comment when asked about the possibility of immunity for congressional testimony. Before the committee's 2005 hearing, Jose Canseco—whose book about steroids in baseball drew congressional scrutiny—requested immunity but was turned down.

The 45-year-old Clemens put off retirement yet again in 2007, returning to the Yankees in June and going 6-6 with a 4.18 ERA. The right-hander hasn't said whether he will pitch in the majors in 2008.

Falcons have interest in Carroll

ATLANTA (AP)—The Atlanta Falcons are interested in Southern California coach Pete Carroll for their head coaching job.

A person familiar with the team's coaching situation told The Associated Press on Wednesday that the Falcons want to speak with Carroll, who is on vacation in Hawaii. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the Falcons have not officially met with Carroll.

Carroll spoke with USC sports information director Tim Tessalone on Wednesday and told Tessalone there are no developments worthy of comment.

"He reiterated that to me this morning on the phone," Tessalone said.

Last week, Carroll told reporters his name would be mentioned in speculation for NFL jobs. Carroll said then he wouldn't fuel speculation by making comments.

"There's nothing going on, no reason to even talk about it," Carroll said last week.

Carroll did not return a message left on his cell phone Wednesday.

Falcons owner Arthur Blank is looking for a coach for the second straight year. After firing Jim Mora a year ago, he hired Louisville coach Bobby Petrino. But Petrino lasted just 13 games before quitting to become the coach at Arkansas.

The Falcons finished 4-12, including a 1-2 mark with interim coach Emmitt Thomas, in a season overshadowed by quarterback Michael Vick's indictment, guilty plea and sentencing to 23 months in federal prison for his role in an interstate dogfighting conspiracy.

Atlanta, also currently looking for a general manager, might be willing to offer Carroll control of player personnel decisions. That could be enough enticement for Carroll to talk with Blank or other team officials.

Former general manager Rich McKay was offered a two-year extension to remain as president through 2010.

Philadelphia general manager Tom Heckert interviewed with team officials Monday.

The Falcons have interviewed at least three coaching candidates: Dallas offensive coordinator Jason Garrett and two assistant head coaches, Jim Caldwell of Indianapolis and Tony Sparano of the Cowboys.

The Falcons plan to interview Jaguars defensive coordinator Mike Smith and Tennessee defensive coordinator Jim Schwartz.

Carroll has experience in the NFL as a head coach and as an assistant in addition to his tremendous success at USC.

Carroll, 56, was 6-10 in as coach of the New York Jets in 1994. He was 28-23 with a division title and two playoff appearances as coach of the New England Patriots from 1997-99.

He is 76-14 with two national championships in seven seasons at USC following an 11-2 record and No. 3 ranking this season. The Trojans capped their season with a 49-17 rout of Illinois in the Rose Bowl.

Judge drops Titans from 'Pacman' lawsuit

LAS VEGAS (AP)—A Nevada judge dropped the NFL's Tennessee Titans from a lawsuit by a strip club employee who was paralyzed in a triple shooting following a melee involving suspended player Adam "Pacman" Jones.

Clark County District Court Judge Jessie Walsh agreed with team lawyers who contended the Titans didn't do business in Nevada and couldn't be held responsible for Jones' behavior at the Minxx Gentleman's Club last Feb. 19.

"I think what's happened to Mr. Urbanski is incredibly unfortunate, and we haven't lost sight of that," Walsh said Wednesday, with wounded club manager Tommy Urbanski sitting in a wheelchair before her.

"This litigation, however, has nothing to do with the Tennessee Titans."

Two Las Vegas lawyers representing the NFL who sat through the hearing said they intend to file a similar request next week asking the judge to also drop the league from the case.

"It's a tragic incident," said Paul Eisinger, a lawyer for the league, "but there's no legal or viable cause of action against the NFL."

The lawsuit filed Oct. 19 seeks unspecified damages from Jones, the NFL, the Titans and the owners of Harlem Knights, a Houston strip club that rented the Las Vegas club for the party the night of the shooting, during NBA All-Star weekend.

Lawyers for Jones and for the Harlem Knights and its representative, Chris Mitchell of Texas, did not attend Wednesday's hearing and declined comment when contacted by telephone.

Urbanski, who said he felt the Titans and the league "created a monster" by failing to discipline Jones for several run-ins with police in other cities before the Las Vegas strip club shooting, said he was disappointed in the judge's decision.

His lawyer, Matthew Dushoff, said he'll seek a rehearing.

Walsh rejected Dushoff's claims that the Titans failed to properly supervise Jones and that the league and team do enough commercial business in Nevada to be held accountable in Nevada courts.

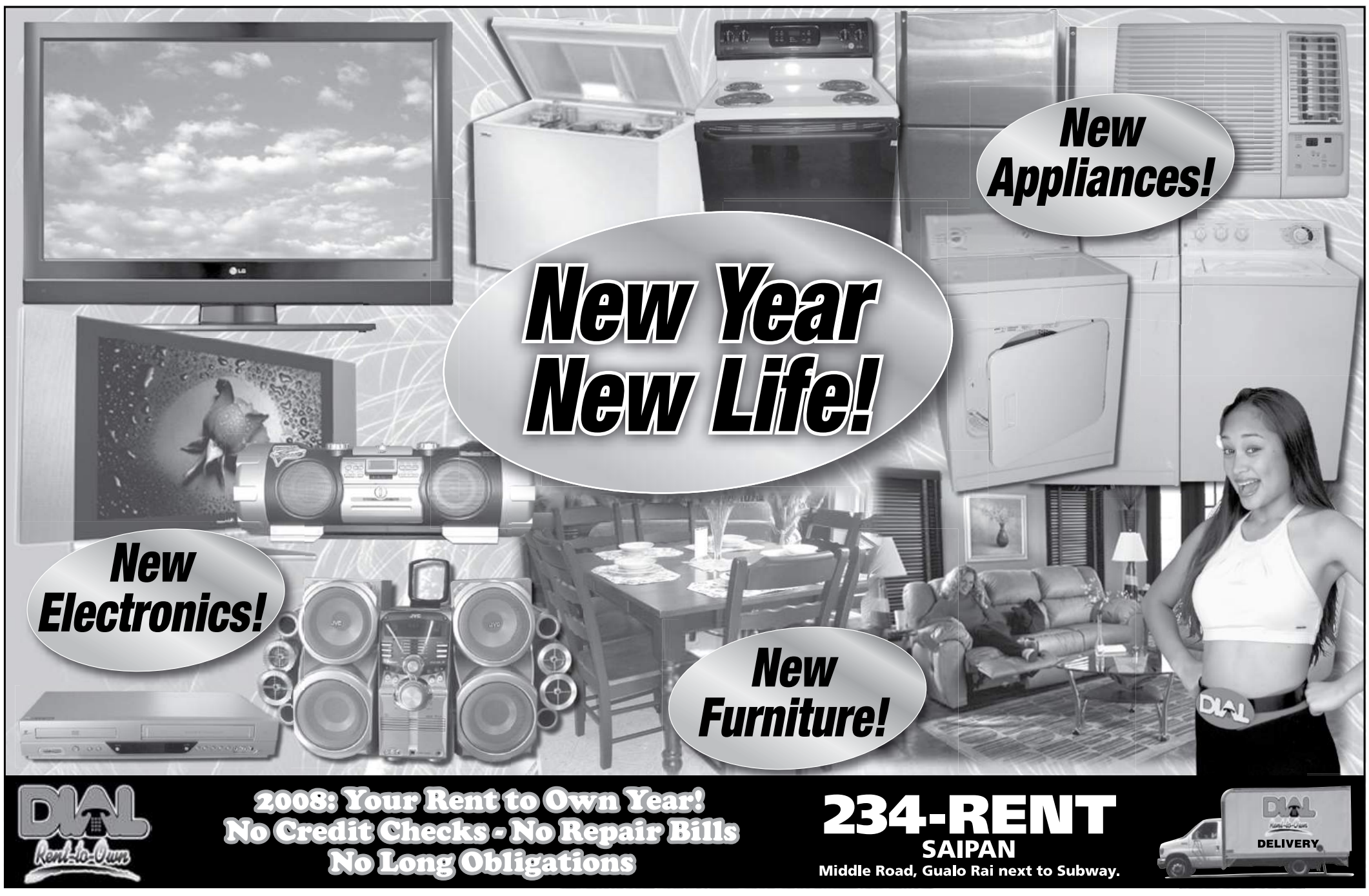
NFL BRIEFS

Owens doesn't practice

IRVING, Texas (AP)—Terrell Owens still wasn't able to practice Wednesday because of a high ankle sprain, continuing the drama of whether the Dallas Cowboys will have their newest All-Pro receiver for the playoff game Sunday against the New York Giants. Coach Wade Phillips didn't even see Owens on Wednesday, but knew he was doing all he could to get healthy. And if T.O. says he's ready to go at game time, Phillips will let him play. "The guy played pretty good in a Super Bowl game that they said he wasn't going to play in," Phillips said. "So I'll be hopeful. But I really don't know." Phillips does know one thing: The rest of Owens' body will be in game shape. "I don't think (stamina) would ever be an issue. He does sit-ups in his driveway," Phillips said, laughing. "It's day to day," Phillips said, "but we're going through a plan or process that's going to try and get him ready, and he's adhered to that. He works out at home, all the time, trying to get better. This is sometimes, a six- to eight-week injury, sometimes it's a four-week injury. So we're trying to get him back in three. That's where we are."

Niners hire Martz to turn offense around

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Mike Martz claims he can put together a fantastic offense with mostly the same San Francisco 49ers who made up the NFL's worst unit in 2007. It's just the type of brash confidence everybody expects from Martz—and Mike Nolan believes every word of it. Nolan hired Martz to be his offensive coordinator Tuesday, tasking one of the NFL's most polarizing coaches with reinventing an offense that sank to historic lows last season. Martz has been on a rocky coaching road for the past three years, but he tormented the 49ers for six years during his greatest successes with their NFC West rival St. Louis Rams. Martz built the so-called Greatest Show on Turf over seven seasons, honing a remarkable passing game while the Rams reached two Super Bowls. After the Detroit Lions fired him last week following two seasons as their offensive coordinator, Martz—who coached alongside Nolan in Washington a decade ago—jumped at the chance to resurrect the franchise that redefined offensive football in the 1980s under Bill Walsh. "There are a lot of really outstanding pieces there that we just need to tie together," Martz said. "If we can do that, they're so well-established in special teams and on defense, I think the potential and the opportunity there is pretty exciting. It's not a challenge, it's an opportunity, and that's the part I enjoy."



Red Bull spills Coke, gains q'final

MANILA, Philippines—Yeng Guiao knows that this might not count the way he wants it to in the long run.

"This win is just to get back our confidence," Guiao said after steering Red Bull to a masterful 116-99 conquest of Coca-Cola Wednesday night at the Cuneta Astrodome in Pasay City that guaranteed the Barako a quarterfinal stint in the Smart PBA Philippine Cup.

"We've been struggling [lately] and a win is always something to boost our morale," the champion coach added. "What we are just trying to accomplish right now is a better record [for the quarterfinals] and a chance for a playoff [for the second outright semifinal seat].

"But I think that (playoff) is highly unlikely at this point."

The Barako were in control right from the get-go with Mick Pennisi leading the way with a career game that ultimately gave Red Bull its 10th win in 17 games.

Coca-Cola lost for the third straight game and dropped to solo ninth spot at 6-11.

Pennisi, one of only two original players left in the Red Bull roster, finished with 29 points, his career-high.

"I guess I just got lucky," the mild-mannered, 6-foot-9 center, who hit 5-of-8 three-point attempts, said. "It just happened that tonight, they left me alone (in the perimeter)."

Red Bull snapped a two-game losing streak with the victory and has Purefoods as its last foe in the elimination round.

Tied for third now with Alaska, both the Barako and the Aces don't hold their fates in their hands, as Sta. Lucia Realty, which has won its last seven games, can win the second seat on Sunday against a skidding Air21 crew.

Meanwhile, the board meeting Thursday that would have had the members voting for the next commissioner has been reset for Thursday next week.

The reason given was that league chair Tony Chua of Red Bull suddenly had some pressing matters to attend to in Hong Kong.

The board is currently believed to be divided on who to choose between lawyer Chito Salud and telecommunications executive Lambert Ramos.

Two rounds of voting last Dec. 17 were not enough for the board to come up with the replacement for Noli Eala, who will be the league's seventh commissioner.

And a check among several members of the board indicated that things would have stayed the same had the third round been held Thursday since supporters of the two candidates have remained steadfast on their respective choices.

Last Dec. 17, Salud and Ramos battled to 5-4 deadlocks. Under league rules, a two-thirds vote, in this case, six of the nine voting teams, is needed for a candidate to win the commissionership.

Red Bull 116 – Pennisi 29, Valenzuela 22, Baguio 21, Hrabak 17, Najorda 7, Bugia 6, Ybanez 5, Sharma 4, Cruz 3, Duncil 2, Membrere 0, Robinson 0.

Coca-Cola 99 – Taulava 24, Cabagnot 17, Catli 11, Telan 11, Buenafe 8, Calimag 8, Isip 7, Enrile 5, Duremdes 4, Dimaunahan 2, Tolomia 2.

Quarters: 35-29, 61-53, 91-80, 116-99. ***(PDI)***

SECOND-HALF

From Page 44

tary Club 18-and-under Youth Basketball League.

The Sonics also eliminated the Junior Nationals in the semifinals of the Micronesian Basketball Tournament in Guam last November.

The Junior Nationals bounced back by beating the Sonics in their elimination round encounter in the Bud Cup and in the finals of the Rotary Club cage league.

In the second game, Rock Steady dealt the Marianas Health Services G-Rollers I a 113-75 dumping, endangering their opponents' playoff bid.

Rock Steady ended the season with a 10-2 mark to tie the Saipan Stevedore Suns at second place. They might end the season at second place because they hold the better quotient against the Suns, whom Rock Steady defeated in overtime, 101-91, last Oct. 27.

The loss endangered the G-Rollers' playoff bid as they hope PTI/FMI loses its game against the D-1 Ulloa's at 7pm today in order to force a three-way tie. A three-way logjam might give the G-Rollers a slim chance of clinching the last playoff spot after the quotient of the three tied teams are known.

Mark Wallace and Fred Pelisamen scored 33 and 30 points apiece to lead Rock Steady with Andres "Jhun" Estolas and Kelvin Fitial contributing 15 and 10 markers, respectively.

Pete Iguel topscored for the G-Rollers I ending up with 27 points, while James Camacho and Trevor Ogumoro chipped in 18 and 10 more.

First Game

CNMI Junior Nationals 93 – Chariton 27, Cruz 26, Tenorio 16, Babauta 8, Deleon Guerrero 4, Jung 4, Rabauliman 4, Blas 2, Moses 2.

Runnin' Rebels 76 – Devero 22, Mendoza 17, Olaitiman 14, Iguel 12, Tumaquip 9, Dela Cruz 2.

Scoring by quarters: 19-20, 42-39, 71-60, 93-76.

Second Game

Rock Steady 113 – Wallace 33, Pelisamen 30, Estolas 15, Fitial 10, Manibusan 8, Awes 6, Lee 6, Ja. Villacrusis 5.

MHS G-Rollers I 75 – Iguel 27, Camacho 18, Ogumoro 10, V. Teregeyo 9, D. Teregeyo 3, Diaz 2, Galulu 2, Lizama 2, Reyes 2.

Scoring by quarters: 32-14, 60-24, 81-47, 113-75.

LABOR

From Page 44

Center to a 15-7 triumph over Division of Agriculture.

Aside from the inside-the-park homer, Torres went 3-for-4, had a triple, scored four runs, and had an RBI.

Ray Guerrero also went 3-for-4 with a double, two runs, and two RBIs, while Melvin Ada, 3-for-4, had two doubles and two RBIs.

Ando Camacho pitched three innings in relief and allowed DOA five earned runs on 13 hits with three strikeouts and no walks. He also had one RBI going 3-for-4 in batting.

The Airport Rescue Fire Fighters leaned on the steady pitching of Jerome Reyes to cruise to a 12-2 victory over the Mayor's Office.

Reyes pitched a complete five innings in the game shortened by the 10-run mercy rule.

He held the Mayor's Office to one earned run on seven hits, while striking out two batters and walking none.

In the first game, Procurement and Supply escaped with a 6-2 decision over the Water Boys.

Catcher John Tomokane went perfect at the plate going 3-for-3, all singles, with one run and one RBI.

Mike Sablan, who replaced Jack Reyes in the third, pitched five innings in relief where he held the Water Boys to two earned runs on seven hits with no strikeouts and no walks.

Games today will have the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. clashing with Customs-Almost in the 6pm first game, while Parks & Rec battles ARFF in the 8pm contest.

The 9pm match will feature the Department of Public Safety going up against the Mayor's Office, while the lone women's game at 7pm will have P&S playing against CHC.

FROM

From Page 44

football organization continued its work of promoting the sport in the CNMI.

Tan, together with NMIFA board members Vicki Izuka and Patty Coleman, delivered the first set of football equipment yesterday at Dandan Elementary School where a brief program was held during the school's flag ceremony.

Tan Holdings Corp., through NMIFA, on Dec. 19 donated $10,000 to purchase goals for the use of CNMI public schools. NMIFA handed over the check to PSS during their principals' meeting.

Tan said donating football equipment to the public schools is one of NMIFA's programs to expand the sport in the CNMI.

"Two and a half years ago, NMIFA made a commitment of promoting [football] in the CNMI."

"NMIFA purchased brand new goal posts and donated it to you at Dandan Elementary School in order for you to learn the sport."

Tan added that he wanted to encourage all DES students to take part in their school's football program to maintain an active and healthy lifestyle. "[Football] is the No. 1 sport in the world. Teaching you how to play is part of NMIFA's commitment to the schools."

DES principal Jonas Barcinas thanked Tan and NMIFA for their donation, saying the students will now have a new activity during their break time. "This will be one of the worthwhile programs that we would have in order for the kids to maintain an active and energetic lifestyle."

"We would like to continue our wellness program and to promote a healthy living in our school. A healthy lifestyle would make students more productive physically and mentally."

Coleman and Izuka were joined by Brenda Schultz, Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary School vice principal Mardy Delsaso, and Garapan Elementary School vice principal Dale Roberts in the inter-scholastic committee.

Coleman said the goal posts will be placed at the DES playground near the stage for recreational purposes. "One [DES] formed a team they will transfer the posts at the softball field to start training for the inter-scholastic league."

DES student council members also presented Tan and the other members of the NMIFA board a certificate of appreciation as a show of gratitude for their generous contribution.

NMIFA also went to Oleai Elementary School to also deliver new football equipment.

Tan Holdings through NMIFA donated the money, which was used to buy equipment for all public schools so they can offer football as a physical education class in all elementary schools. NMIFA will be donating goal posts, footballs, nets, and cones to all public schools.

Once all equipment are given to the schools and the kids had regular practice sessions at their own field, NMIFA would start organizing an interscholastic tournament where elementary students can compete.

NMIFA is hoping the CNMI would someday have the same number of players that Guam has and the number of kids playing football on Saipan would reach 1,000.

HEO

From Page 44

The 15-year-old Heo reached the Last 16 after another stunning three-set 6-4, 4-6, 7-6 victory over the 11th ranked Joel Morrison in the Round of 32. He drew a first-round bye and reached the Round of 32 after scoring a 6-4, 6-2 win over Dane Hallinan of Victoria in the Round of 64.

Shepheard now faces No. 4 Scott Wagland of New South Wales in today's semifinals with the winner facing the winner of the match between the third seeded Adam Taylor and the seventh ranked Michael McKee in tomorrow's finals.

Heo also played in the boys' 16-and-under doubles division where he teamed up with fellow International Tennis Federation Pacific Oceania Junior touring team member William O'Connell.

Heo and O'Connell reached the Last 16 but ran smack against the second-seeded pair of Joel Morrison and Ethan Scobe. The duo went on to suffer a heartbreaking 6-3, 3-6,4-10 loss.

Morrison and Scobe went on to reach the semifinals after an easy 6-2, 6-1 decision against Jack Murray and Taylor Neve in the quarterfinals. They will face the third ranked duo of Ethan Coker and Oliver Good in today's semis.

Heo and O'Connell reached the Last 16 after coming back from a set down to pull off a 5-7, 6-4, 10-8 win over the tandem of Shepheard and Domenic De Nichilo in the Round of 32.

Competition in the Margaret Court Cup ends tomorrow, Jan. 12, where boys and girls events in the 10-, 12-, 14-, 16-, and 18-and-under age division titles will be contested.

After the Margaret Courth Cup, Heo's next tournament will be the CountryLink Victoria Junior Grasscourt Championships in Wodonga from Jan. 12 to 15.

Heo also reached the semifinal round of the consolation draw of two age divisions in the 2008 Ducats G.V. Junior Tennis Tournament in Shepparton, Australia last Sunday where he lost to tougher opponents from the host team at the Shepparton Lawn Tennis Club.

Heo is competing in his first Australian junior championship tournament after being invited to become a member of the International Tennis Federation Pacific-Oceania Junior touring team late last year.

Heo received an invitation to join the ITF Pacific-Oceania Junior touring team in Australia last October. He left Saipan last Dec. 27 to join a group of Under-18 players that will travel around Australia from Dec. 30 to Jan. 18.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	29	4	.879	_
New Jersey	18	17	.514	12
Toronto	18	17	.514	12
Philadelphia	14	22	.389	16 1/2
New York	9	25	.265	20 1/2

Southeast Division

Orlando	23	14	.622	_
Washington	17	16	.515	4
Atlanta	16	16	.500	4 1/2
Charlotte	13	21	.382	8 1/2
Miami	8	28	.222	14 1/2

Central Division

Detroit	26	9	.743	_
Cleveland	18	18	.500	8 1/2
Indiana	16	21	.432	11
Milwaukee	15	20	.429	11
Chicago	13	20	.394	12

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

San Antonio	23	10	.697	_
Dallas	24	11	.686	_
New Orleans	23	12	.657	1
Houston	19	17	.528	5 1/2
Memphis	10	24	.294	13 1/2

Northwest Division

Portland	22	13	.629	_
Denver	21	13	.618	1/2
Utah	19	17	.528	3 1/2
Seattle	9	26	.257	13
Minnesota	5	29	.147	16 1/2

Pacific Division

Phoenix	25	10	.714	_
L.A. Lakers	23	11	.676	1 1/2
Golden State	20	16	.556	5 1/2
Sacramento	13	20	.394	11
L.A. Clippers	10	22	.313	13 1/2

Yesterday's Games

Atlanta 90, Cleveland 81
Toronto 109, Philadelphia 96
Charlotte 95, Boston 83
Houston 101, New York 92
New Jersey 99, Seattle 88
Milwaukee 98, Miami 92
L.A. Lakers 109, New Orleans 80
Phoenix 129, Indiana 122, OT
Dallas 102, Detroit 86
Portland 109, Golden State 91
Orlando 113, L.A. Clippers 106

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOCAL SCORES

Bud Cup Standings

x-Ol'Aces	11	1	
y-Rock Steady	10	2	
y-Suns	10	2	
y-Sonics	9	3	
y-Junior Nationals	8		4
Runnin Rebels	6	6	
Bombers	6	6	
PTI/FMI	5	6	
G-Rollers I	5	7	
D-I Ulloa's	4	7	
G-Rollers II	3	9	
Lali IV	1	11	
Proa	0	12	

x-clinched pennant
y-clinch playoff spot

After two-year absence, UFO caging to return

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSISTANT EDITOR

The United Filipino Organization, the umbrella group of Filipino organizations on Saipan, hopes to revive its widely popular basketball league in late February or early March 2008.

In a phone interview yesterday, UFO official and league coordinator Leo Canedo said the group will hold an organizational meeting next week to find out interest in the basketball league, which used to be held annually but was scrapped the past two years because of an assortment of problems.

Canedo said like in previous stagings of the league, entry fee is $700 and as many as 12 teams can be accommodated by the organization.

Games likely will be held on weekends with two games slated for Saturday and a triple-header scheduled on Sunday.

Canedo said interested teams must be affiliated with a UFO member organization and are allowed to carry the names of their sponsoring companies as well.

The UFO cage league was last staged in the 2005 season and saw Samahang Ilokano at Pangasinense win its fourth overall championship after besting Cabalen in their best-of-three series.

SIP, led by veteran playmaker Rick Alegre, former national player Edsel Mendoza, and whippet-quick guard Elmer Esdrelon, drew first blood with an 88-79 victory over the Ronald Delos Reyes- and Dalewin Cortez-powered Cabalen in Game 1 in March 5, 2006.

Cabalen bounced back in Game 2 a week later when they forced a third and deciding game following a 99-85 triumph against SIP last March 12, 2006.

SIP sealed the deal in Game 3 when it repulsed Cabalen's late-game heroics in March 19, 2006, to claim the title, 95-86.

SIP won the first three years of the UFO league, 2000-2002; Visminda won the next two, 2003-2004, before SIP returned to the top with the victory in 2005.

For more information about the 2008 season of the UFO Basketball League, call UFO secretary Olive Yana at 285-7893.

SAIPAN TRIBUNE
Randy Arnedo of Cabalen goes to the basket against Samahang Ilokano at Pangasinense's Junar Guiab, left, and Edsel Mendoza in Game 2 of their UFO Basketball League best-of-three finals last March 12, 2006, at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Youth football registration tomorrow

JON PEREZ
Youth Football League players battle for ball possession in this file photo taken in last season's Fall Festival of Football at the Hopwood Junior High School field last November.

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Northern Mariana Islands Football Association will start registration for its Youth Football League tomorrow from 8am to 2pm at the parking lot of the Marianas Visitors Authority office near Microl Toyota.

YFL coordinator Sue Knecht said blank forms are available at the MVA office in case parents would miss the Saturday registration. "You can find the blank forms and the registration box inside the [MVA office] building next to the door."

Knecht said payment is not necessary with the registration form and she advised parents not to place any money inside the form or in the box.

The youth football season begins on Jan. 19 and will end April 5 this year. Practices will be scheduled either Monday or Wednesday while games will be played every Saturday.

Regular practices will be held at the zone that the kids live in. NMIFA divided Saipan into four zones composed of the North, Central, East, and West and South zones.

The North zone is composed of the villages of Marpi, San Roque, As Matuis, Tanapag, Sadog Tasi, and Capital Hill north of the Isa Road boundary up to Santa Lourdes Road.

The villages of Puerto Rico, Navy Hill, China Town, Mt. Tapochao, Gualo Rai, Chalan Laulau, Chalan Kiya, and Capital Hill south of the Isa Road boundary all the way to Santa Lourdes comprise the Central zone.

Zone III or East zone is made up of the villages of As Teo, Papago, Kagman, Kanat Tabla, San Vicente, and the east side Airport Road boundary at upper Dandan.

The West and South zones is composed of San Jose, Oleai, Chalan Kanoa, Chalan Piao, Fina Sisu, As Lito, San Antonio, Koblerville, Obyan, Naftan, Coral Ocean Point, and the lower Dandan area at the west side of the Airport Road boundary.

Last year, the youth league opened during the third quarter with three zones that used four playing venues around the island. NMIFA used the fields in Navy Hill, and the elementary schools in Garapan, San Vicente, and Gregorio T. Camacho.

NMIFA decided to add the fourth zone in order to include more island youth in their ongoing football program.

All four zones are already accepting registration and the signup started last Dec. 15. Those who can play in the league next season are kids age 15 below or those born in 1993 and up.

A $25 registration fee will be collected per youth player and all payments will be accepted at the beginning of practice on Jan. 19.

Women's boot camp starts tomorrow

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

In preparation for its upcoming 7-on-7 league, the Women's Football Committee will start its boot camp tomorrow from 9am to 11am at the American Memorial Park Field.

The cost of registration is $10 per player. The league is tentatively set to open on Jan. 26 and will run up to early March.

Another boot camp will be held on Jan. 19 at the same place and time. The WFC decided to hold a boot camp to introduce the sport to all new players while at the same time increase the skill level of the veterans.

Organizers will no longer purchase uniforms to keep the entrance fee low and players can wear any sports attire that is comfortable with them. The registration fee will be determined soon.

WFC member Becca Newman is also encouraging all female players that competed in last season's recreational league to sign up. "[We also] challenge them to bring along one new friend to the sport. No experience necessary to play."

In the 7-on-7 league, each team will play with seven players including the goalkeeper. The league intends to let the players focus on improving their skills in a faster-pace game than the recreational league.

The 7-on-7 league wants to stress the improvement and development of all players.

Last month, Newman was part of a seven-player team that competed in a similar 7-on-7 tournament on Guam. The team finished third in the two tournaments they competed in, the other one being Futsal.

Newman was named the best keeper of the games, while teammate Emily Gries won the offensive player of the tournament. Both players failed to attend the award ceremony due to their flight schedule.

Aside from Newman and Gries the other members of the team were Zoe Jewell, Brenda Schultz, Katie Peters, Madison Schultz, and Alleny Tenorio.

For more information about the 7-on-7 league, email Newman at rnewman112@hotmail.com or Vanessa Pritchard at holly_jollyvkp@hotmail.com.

RGA halves membership fee for 2008

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSISTANT EDITOR

Recognizing the harsh economic times currently besetting the CNMI, the Refaluwasch Golf Association has decided to halve its membership dues for 2008 from the long-standing fee of $50 to only $25.

RGA president "emeritus" and current tournament director Jess Wabol said hard times call for hard decisions and one of these is the slashing of membership costs.

He said he hopes by making membership in RGA a little lighter in the pockets, more weekend warriors will now return to the golf links and renew their membership or apply as new members of the golf club.

Wabol added that RGA is also instituting a new promotion this year wherein members who take part in at least 10 rounds by the time the annual RGA Turkey Shoot in November comes around, will get free entry into the tournament.

Wabol also announced that RGA will kick off its 2008 season by holding its January Ace of the Month Tournament on Jan. 20 at the Marianas Country Club.

He said check in time is 11am with tee time set an hour later at 12pm.

For more information about RGA's new membership policies, upcoming January Ace of the Month Tournament, and other competitions held by the club, contact RGA president Adam Hardwicke at 483-2926 or Wabol at 233-3673.

SAIPAN TRIBUNE
Refaluwasch Golf Association president "emeritus" and current tournament director Jess Wabol, seen here in a file photo, is inviting new members and old members to take advantage of RGA's reduced membership fee for the 2008 season.

After two-year absence, UFO caging to return

The United Filipino Organization, the umbrella group of Filipino organizations on Saipan, hopes to revive its widely popular basketball league in late February or early March 2008.

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

Hawks beat Cavs for 1st home win in series since 2003

Joe Johnson scored 27 points to lead five Atlanta scorers in double figures and the Hawks held off a late comeback to beat the Cavaliers 90-81 on Wednesday for their first home win over Cleveland since 2003.

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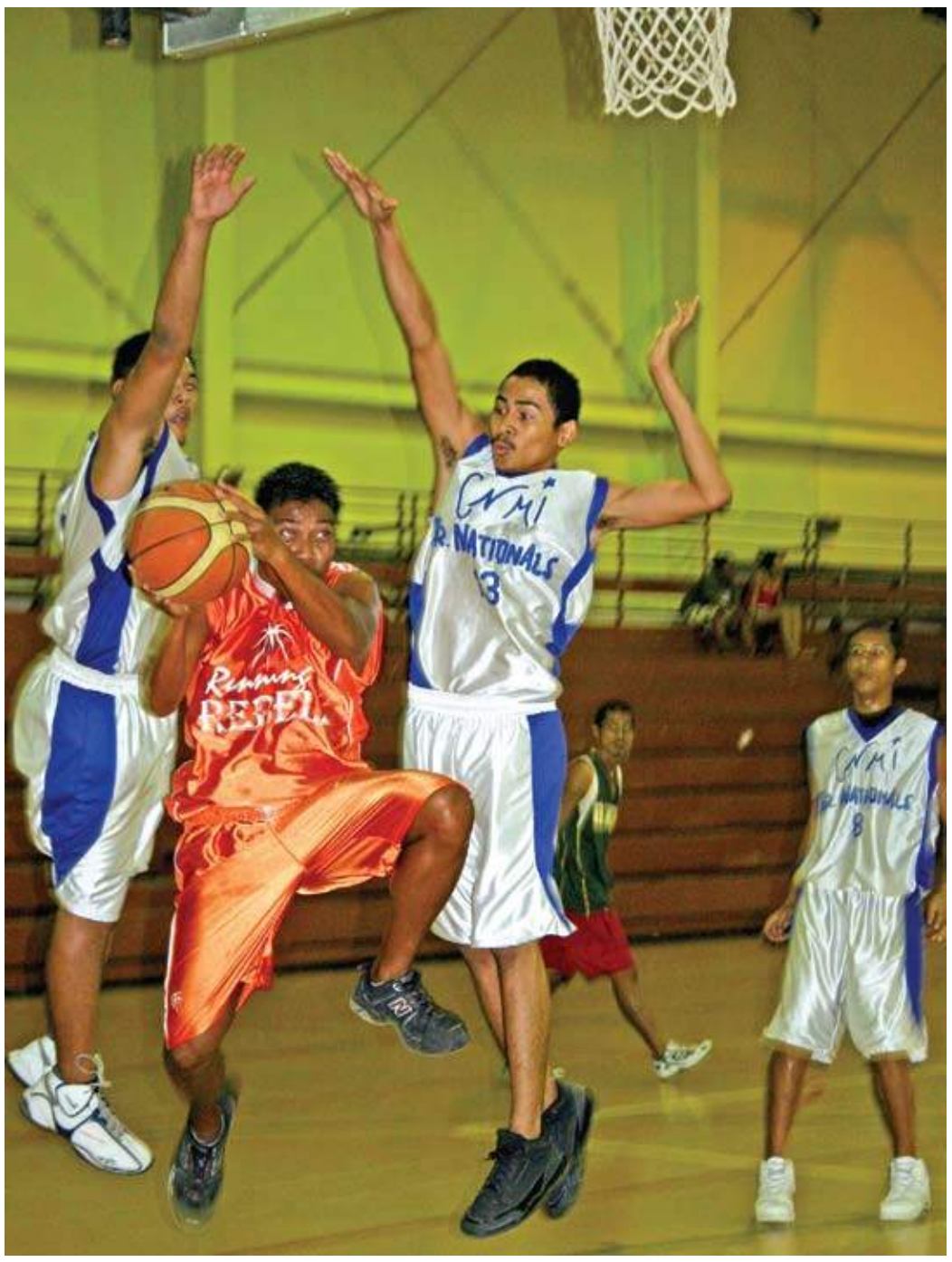
Second-half surge lifts Jr. Nationals past Rebels



JON PEREZ

Dexter Dillay of the Runnin' Rebels, center, is sandwiched by the defense of the CNMI Junior Nationals' Bill Babauta, left, and Marvin Rabauliman in their game in the 2007 BANMI-Budweiser Cup Men's Islandwide Basketball League on Wednesday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

A second-half scoring surge lifted the CNMI Junior Nationals to a 93-76 victory over the Runnin' Rebels in the first game of the scheduled doubleheader in the BANMI-Budweiser Cup Men's Islandwide Basketball League on Wednesday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Jericho Cruz struggled in the first half where the Rebels fought the Junior Nationals to a seesaw battle. The Rebels of coach Elias Rangamar enjoyed a 36-28 lead with 4:11 left in the second half.

After Jose Tumaquip sank a midrange jumper to give the Rebels their biggest lead, Junior Nationals coach Ed Manalili called time out to make the needed adjustments against the Rebels' defensive play.

Receiving a tongue lashing from Manalili during the time out, the Junior Nationals responded with a closing 14-3 exchange to enjoy a 42-39 halftime lead.

That sort of fired up Cruz and the rest of the Junior Nationals as they continued with their hot shooting from the field, while clamping down on the Rebels' shooters, closing the door shut and preventing their slashers from getting inside.

Cruz scored 17 of his 26 points in the second half where the Junior Nationals started to distance themselves from the Rebels.

Keoni Chariton paced the Junior Nationals with 27 points, while Steven Tenorio added 16 markers.

Ivan Devero led the Rebels with 22 points while Jolan Mendoza, Mike Olaitiman, and Luis Iguel chipped in 17, 14, and 12 markers.

Despite the loss, the Rebels still made the playoffs tying the Bombers at 6-6. The win improved the Junior Nationals record to 8-4 and they might be headed into another playoff clash with bitter rival Southern Sonics.

The Sonics holds a 3-2 lead in their head-to-head match up with the Junior Nationals. They defeated the Junior Nationals in the finals of an NYBA-organized tournament early last year and in the elimination round of the 17th Saipan Ro-

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Heo beaten in Margaret Cup quarters finals

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Ji Hoon Heo rips a forehand in this file photo taken in the 2006 Saipan Micronesian Games at the Pacific Islands Club tennis courts.

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Ji Hoon Heo's semifinal bid in the 2008 Australia Post Margaret Court Cup ended yesterday when he was beaten by George Shepheard at the Albury Tennis Association courts in Towsend St. Albury, New South Wales.

The unranked Heo suffered a 3-6, 3-6 quarterfinal loss against sixth seed George Shepheard of Alice Springs, ending his amazing run in his second Australian junior tournament.

Heo's loss to Shepheard yesterday tempered somewhat his quarterfinal celebration where he bounced back from a first set loss to score a hard-earned 3-6, 6-3, 6-3 upset win against the second-seeded Oliver Good of Victoria in the Last 16.

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'From recreation to competition'

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Northern Mariana Islands Football Association president Jerry Tan is hoping that someday more students in the Public School System would get the chance to learn and play football as the local

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RELATED NEWS
Youth football registration tomorrow **PAGE 43**
Women's boot camp starts tomorrow **PAGE 43**

JON PEREZ

Northern Northern Mariana Island Football Association president Jerry Tan, NMIFA board member Vicki Izuka, Dandan Elementary School principal Jonas Barcinas, and interscholastic committee member Patty Coleman join DES students for a group photo after NMIFA donated football equipment to DES in yesterday's presentation at their school grounds.

Labor claims fourth win

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Department of Labor claimed its fourth straight win Wednesday night in the 2007 season of the Inter-Government Men's Softball League at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Pangelinan Softball Field.

Javier Olopai and Roy Tarope combined for 8-for-8 in batting to lead Labor to a 16-9 win over the Lawmakers in Wednesday's final game. Tarope and Olopai went perfect at the plate.

Tarope also scored three runs and had two RBIs, while Olopai had one run, a double, and one RBI.

Earlier, Frank Torres blasted an inside-the-park solo home run to lead Commonwealth Health

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